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Diasporas in Multiculturalism: Managing Difference

By

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Declaration and Statements

This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

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Statement 1

This thesis is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. Other sources are acknowledged by footnotes giving explicit references. A bibliography is appended.

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Abstract:

Motivated by the desire to see a world living up to the ideal of harmonious multicultural communities, this thesis critically assesses two contemporary approaches to multiculturalism, namely Liberalism 1 and 2. The central argument forwarded here is that although Liberalism 1 and 2 are commendable approaches to the management of difference in a polity, they are unable to secure long-term inter-group harmony owing to the static understanding of identity that underpins both approaches.

To highlight the shortcomings of Liberalism 1 and 2, this thesis examines the relationship between diasporas and more sessile communities. Diasporas have been specifically selected for this purpose for two reasons. Firstly, most comprehensive discussions on multiculturalism have not employed the experience of diasporas in their research. Secondly, as the number of diasporas are set to grow and as the term is traditionally used in a negative way in reference to a 'difficult' minority, there is a need to examine approaches towards multiculturalism through diasporic eyes.

Evaluation of the three diasporic experiences of the Chinese, Africans and Jews in both Liberalism 1 and 2 has supported the main argument of the thesis. All three experiences have revealed that Liberalism 1 and 2 are unable to attain their long-term goals for multiculturalism due to three difficulties that stem from their static notion of identity. (1) Both positions foreclose the possibility for long-term harmony in a multicultural polity due to an overly pessimistic approach to the management of difference. Due to this foreclosure, predictions of conflict unwittingly prove to be true. (2) Liberalism 1 is overly reliant on constant but unachievable enforcement with its difference-blind approach to the management of difference. (3) The need for Liberalism 2 to compartmentalise individuals into distinct groups leads to the perpetuation of stereotypes while also denying individuals the opportunity to redefine themselves.

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List of Abbreviations

BLS	Black Star Line
EU	European Union
IR	International Relations
JLC	*Joy Luck Club*
JTO	Jewish Territorial Organisation
NBA	National Basketball Association
OED	Oxford English Dictionary
SS	*Sour Sweet*
UK	United Kingdom
UNIA	Universal Negro Improvement Association
US	United States
WHF	World *Huaren* Federation

Chapter One: Introduction

Migration appears to be an enduring aspect of human life. Throughout centuries people have been on the move and they have covered vast distances in doing so. There have been a plethora of reasons for what appears to be a perpetual movement: communities have left their settlements due to unfavourable environmental change; conquering armies have acquired new territory and brought settlers in their wake; whole societies have been uprooted by expulsion or had to flee from their conquerors; the unemployed have moved in search of work; opportunists have gone in search of their own *el Derado*; and the curious and the adventurous have journeyed to satisfy their thirst.

Nonetheless, what is significant about international migration is its alteration of the very composition of a state's population. The practise of migration has had a considerable impact on shaping political boundaries and as such on creating and reshaping states in terms of political, economic and cultural alterations. Prominent examples signifying the importance of migration for the development of states have been the creation of Canada, Singapore, Brazil and Australia. In fact, given the long history of migration, it could be argued that few states can maintain that migration has not had a hand in the evolution of their political and cultural landscape. As

Weiner (1985: 453) emphasises, migration has a deep impact on a state's political, economic and cultural composition as 'it brings the outside in and involves sending a segment of one's community to another'.

Despite the fact that migration has been a constant feature of human life, people 'on the move' appear to have persistently been considered dangerous and untrustworthy. Expression of negative attitudes towards migrants can be found in as early as ancient Greece where Homer characterised the so-called *metrics* or non-citizens as 'clanless' and 'hearthless' (Cohen and Vertovec, 2002: 5)[1]. Examples in modern history include the conditions of extreme nationalism or totalitarianism, such as the Soviet Union, Nazi Germany or Fascist Italy. In these cases, those who were understood as rootless or not of the land, for example, Jews and Gypsies were often the first to be sent off to the Gulags or the gas chambers. Contemporary expression of distrust for people that appear to be peripatetic is most obvious in discussions on the transnational capitalist class. Social commentator Christopher Lasch echoes this view:

> In the borderless global economy, money has lost its links to nationality [...]. The privileged classes in Los Angeles feel more kinship with their counterparts in Japan, Singapore, and Korea than with most of their countrymen. This detachment from the state means they regard themselves as 'world citizens' without any of the normal obligations of national citizenship. They no longer pay their share of taxes or contribute to democratic life (Lasch, 1995: 46).

Against the background of human movement and the accompanying experience of 'lived difference', this thesis focuses on the theoretical and normative challenges of managing differences that accompany migration. The central argument

put forward in this research is the following. Although contemporary policies on multiculturalism are laudable approaches to managing difference within multicultural polities they are unable to produce comprehensive and long-term concord.[2] In order to find evidence for this claim, this thesis focuses on two specific theoretical foundations of contemporary policies on multiculturalism – termed Liberalism 1 and Liberalism 2. As defined by Michael Walzer, the difference between Liberalism 1 and 2 is: Liberalism 1 'is committed in the strongest possible way to individual rights and, almost as a deduction from this, to a rigorously neutral state... a state without... any sort of collective goals beyond the personal freedom and physical security, welfare, and safety of its citizens' (Walzer, 1994a: 99); while Liberalism 2 'allows for a state to be committed to the survival and flourishing of a particular nation, culture or religion, or of a (limited) set of nations, cultures, and religions – so long as the basic rights of citizens who have different commitments or no such commitments at all are protected' (Walzer, 1994a: 99). Through an analysis of the relationship between diasporas and more sessile communities, this thesis aims to demonstrate that neither theoretical approach is able to provide an adequate structure for the long-term management of difference by states (including state-like actors such as, for example, the European Union and various forms of empire). For this purpose, I have chosen in this thesis to focus on the Jewish, African and Chinese diaspora and aim to assess the theoretical assumptions of both Liberalism 1 and 2 through their experiences.[3]

The remainder of this introductory chapter is structured as follows. Section 1.1 introduces the methodological tools employed in this thesis followed by a justification for the choice of the Jewish, African and Chinese diasporas in Section

1.2. Finally, this chapter concludes with a detailed outline of the structure of this research project in Section 1.3.

1.1 Methodology

This thesis contributes to the academic debate surrounding diasporas and multiculturalism in two ways. Firstly, this thesis contributes to the considerable body of literature on multiculturalism seeking to further clarify our understanding of the term (see Gutmann 1994, Goldberg 1994, Kymlicka 1995, Favell 1998, Willett 1998, Parekh 2000). As Stephen Castles (2000: 5) points out, very much of what is encapsulated in the term multiculturalism involves 'abandoning the myth of homogeneous and monocultural nation-states' and 'recognizing rights to cultural maintenance and community formation, and linking these to social equality and protection from discrimination'. More specifically, this thesis adds to the discussion on multiculturalism by assessing two underlying theoretical foundations of contemporary policies on multiculturalism (i.e. Liberalism 1 and 2) through the novel employment of the experience of diasporas in such policies. Importantly, the past ten years have witnessed the rise of an approach to migration and multiculturalism that emphasises the continued attachment migrants maintain to the people, traditions and movements located outside the boundaries of the nation-state in which they reside (For example, Schiller *et al.* 1992, Smith and Guarnizo 1998, Vertovec and Cohen 1999, Portes *et al.* 1999a, Pries 1999). While recognising the long-standing forms of migrant connection to homelands, most of those scholars who engage with this approach emphasise the many ways in which today's linkages are different – or more passionate – than the homeland-immigration land

connections of migrants in earlier periods and the implications this has for multiculturalism (Foner 1997, Portes *et al.* 1999b). By analysing the experience of diasporas against the theoretical viewpoint of Liberalism 1 and 2, this thesis contributes to the arguments made by those above that multiculturalism should not be based on an implicit zero-sum understanding of social/cultural/political belonging: a model where either one is in or out. Instead, the experience of diasporas reveals that most migrants do, and are in fact, comfortable with possessing more than one identity, and that multicultural polices which do not recognise this tend to be unable to sustain long-term inter-polity harmony. It is this new 'loosened' model where identity is seen as 'variation' that forces a review of Liberalism 1 and 2 and their ontological foundations based on the previous zero-sum model.

Secondly, this thesis adds to current mainstream Political Theory and International Relations' thinking on migrants – specifically diasporas – by bringing together four broad bodies of writing. Drawing on the key literature from the discipline of Cultural and Postcolonial Studies[4] surrounding migrants and diasporas, this thesis seeks to bring the sensitivity displayed by cultural and postcolonial theorists towards identity and identification – particularly the diverse strategies and the rationale behind identity and identification – to Political Theory and International Relations literature on the politics of movement. Thus, this thesis attempts to go some way towards remedying the lack of full engagement between the disciplines by taking an interdisciplinary approach to the emergence, continued existence and possible proliferation of the diasporic experience.

In line with this interdisciplinary approach, this thesis draws on the key social and political writings of a number of diasporic intellectuals, nationalists and civil rights activists and it employs the speeches, writings, autobiographies and

commentaries of those situated – both leaders and led – within diaspora. Eschewing a purely 'top-down' approach where theories are debated without much engagement with the views and experiences 'from the trenches', it is hoped that a more comprehensive account (i.e. the incorporation of the views and experiences of the various sections of the diaspora) will sufficiently ground the arguments made here and furnish the thesis with a more 'real world' perspective. Furthermore, to conceptualise the transfer of values and ideas – a vital aspect for the process whereby members of the diaspora maintain group integrity – the thesis draws on work within Cultural Studies, and in particular, on the writings of Stuart Hall. His notion of identity as a passing moment of strategic articulation is used here in conjunction with the key literature on the diasporic experience in order to arrive at an understanding of the ground for identification with a diaspora and the political environment that prompts it to form.

In sum, this thesis focuses specifically on the experience of diasporas to evaluate the multicultural policies of Liberalism 1 and 2, rather than providing an overarching general position on transnational communities in multiculturalism in general. Although it is hoped that the research here may be of relevance to other transnational communities, this thesis is primarily concerned with diasporas for two reasons. Firstly, though conceding that the experiences of other transnational communities may be similar to that of diasporas, it will be shown that the term *diaspora* can still be deployed primarily as an account of a distinct form of living. Although diasporas are similar to other collectives such as border communities, expatriates and minorities they are also distinctive from such groups. Throughout their long history, elements of diasporas have, of course, been border communities, expatriates and minorities. However, it is argued in this thesis that they possess

enough unique characteristics to stand alone. Secondly, some limits will inevitably have to be placed on the scope of this intellectual enquiry. I have resisted the temptation to expand the semantic domain of *diaspora* to include 'words like immigrant, expatriate, refugee, guestworker, exile community, overseas community, ethnic community' (Tölöyan, 1991: 4) by focussing specifically on the diasporic experience in order to ensure my analysis is both manageable and thorough.

1.2 Justification for the Choice of Episodes

This research employs the experience of diasporas in order to demonstrate the failings of two underlying theoretical foundations of contemporary policies on multiculturalism, namely Liberalism 1 and 2. Diasporas have been specifically chosen for this purpose for two reasons. Firstly, the use of the experience of diasporas to engage theories on multiculturalism remains relatively unexplored. For example, in three of the more comprehensive approach to the politics of multiculturalism by Bhikhu Parekh (2000), Charles Taylor (1994) and Will Kymlicka (1995), Parekh writes on minorities in general, Taylor in more abstract notions of 'us' and 'them' while Kymlicka's key concern is for indigenous peoples or 'national minorities', like Quebec. Secondly, there is a need to discuss diasporas in multiculturalism due to a recent inflation in the usage of the term and the traditional use of the term in reference to a 'difficult' minority. For an example of the traditional conception of diasporas as a 'difficult' minority, the definition of diaspora in the Oxford English Dictionary (*OED*) suggests a negative connotation of the term based on the Jewish experience. The *OED* defines diaspora as 'the dispersion of the Jews among the Gentiles mainly in the eighth to sixth century BC'

and 'any group of people similarly dispersed'. Following from this, diaspora along with the its code word *Babylon* became terms used by the Jews and, later, by groups such as the Armenians, Africans, Chinese, for feelings of isolation, insecurity and exile from living in a foreign place, cut from one's root and sense of identity, and oppressed by an alien ruling class. As there are now at least thirty ethnic groups that declare themselves diasporas or are deemed such by others (Cohen, 1996: 507), there may be a need to assess multiculturalism through their eyes. On the basis of these two observations, I feel that diasporic experiences are ideal test cases to further evaluate the ability of Liberalism 1 and 2 to provide long-term accord in a multicultural polity.

As the notion of diaspora implies an expansively dispersed collective, I have opted to situate my analysis in a global context rather than choosing to focus on the experiences of all three diasporas – the Jews, the Africans and the Chinese – in one particular country. Though broad, it is felt that this approach allows for a better appreciation of the manner in which different nodes of a diaspora interact and affect each other. For example, one cannot understand the rise of Chinese diasporic consciousness around the globe without taking into consideration the opening of China to foreign investment coupled with the economic success of the overseas Chinese in countries like Singapore, the United States and the United Kingdom (Kwong, 1996: 26-31).

The reasons for selecting the Chinese, African and Jewish diasporas are fourfold: (1) the experience of the Jewish and African diaspora is similar in that both associate their original dispersal with forced displacement; (2) both the Jews and the Chinese have displayed uneasiness with the application of the term *diaspora* to describe their position fearing they may be portrayed as perpetual foreigners in the

lands they inhabit; (3) all three groups in question share the experience of being a diaspora that has been removed several times – the initial displacement from a point of origin has been followed by further dispersal; and (4), all three groups have experienced forced as well as voluntary migration.

In order to avoid the positivist overtones of the traditional notion of a *case study*, the three diasporic experiences chosen in this research are termed *episodes*. The purpose of the episodes in question is two-fold. Firstly, they are employed to further assess the theories under discussion, and secondly, the experiences of the three groups are deployed to provide a link between the theoretical aspects of this research with empirical examples of the 'real world'. As such, within each episode, examples from history will be used to clarify the theoretical discussion of this research and vice versa. Therefore, the episodes are understood here as being part of the process of generating an adequate theory as well as providing an assessment of the cogency of the theory.[5]

In addition, the diasporic experiences chosen in this research are episodic in character as they continue to unfold with time thus revealing new strategies and new adaptations. For example, every new technological development in travel and communication allows for greater contact between different nodes of a diaspora. Where previously nodes of a diaspora may happen to be cut-off from each other, diasporic communities are now in a position to maintain intense linkages and exchanges, including marriage alliances, religious activity, media and commodity consumption. For example, Chinese television programmes are received among the Chinese across Europe through satellite or cable systems, while Jewish religious leaders travel between Israel and their respective communities in Europe and the United States. Hence, transnational connections enable migrants much more than

ever before to maintain collective identities and practices (see Hannerz 1996, Smith and Guarnizo 1998, Portes *et al.* 1999a). Moreover, choosing the notion of *episode* over *case study* allows this research to emphasise how each episode discussed in this research flows into the next, thus building on the other and allowing for further insights into the diasporic experience in the context of multiculturalism.

Finally, this thesis chooses to first discuss the diasporic experience of the Chinese followed by the Africans and finally, the Jews. Contrary to most studies on diasporas that consider the Jewish experience the paradigmatic example of diasporic experience, this thesis places it at the end of the analysis. By studying the Chinese and African experiences first, this thesis aims to shed a different light on the diasporic experience in general. This in turn is expected to have a bearing on the manner in which the Jewish experience is understood. This different approach to understanding diasporas is needed in order to break away from the overly negative connotation of the term illustrated by the *OED*'s definition. Therefore, if diasporas are not represented as disgruntled dispersed communities awaiting redemption by way of return to their 'motherland', their relationship with other members of a polity in which they reside need not be taken to be a hostile one from the outset. Instead, the relationship between diasporas and their hosts are seen to be more complex and positive. Diasporas here are understood to be less threatening, less problematic and less hostile in their relations with fellow members of their polity.

1.3 Structure

In order to discuss the limitations of both Liberalism 1 and 2 in the light of the experience of diasporas, this thesis proceeds as follows. Beginning with a summary

and brief discussion of the current debate on multiculturalism and an introduction of the concept of diaspora, this thesis then proceeds to place the conceptual and theoretical considerations in the context of the three episodes in question. More precisely, through a discussion on diasporic identity and the concept of home in constructing such an identity within the context of each of the three episodes, the experience of diasporas is used to show that identity should be understood as variation. While acknowledging the similarities between all three diasporas, a sustained engagement with diasporic history and multiculturalism in history will be conducted with reference to the Jewish episode of diaspora. As it will be shown, the similarities between the three episodes are of a degree that justifies the engagement with the oldest and most discussed diaspora of the Jews for the successful advancement of this thesis' main argument. As mentioned above, the episodic nature of each diasporic experience builds towards an in depth discussion on diasporas in multiculturalism – given the similar experiences of the three examples chosen, it matters little which diaspora is deployed for this discussion. This thesis concludes with a discussion on the wider implications for theorising on multiculturalism arising from the thesis' main argument, namely that Liberalism 1 and 2 are unable to secure long-term harmony between different segments of a polity. The following sections provide a more detailed chapter outline.

Chapter Two of this thesis begins by placing Liberalism 1 and 2 in the context of the wider debate on multiculturalism whilst introducing the concept of diaspora. Multiculturalism is understood here as a continuum of possible approaches to the management of difference within a polity spanning from a policy of assimilation at one polemical extreme and of separation at the other. This thesis aims to assess Liberalism 1 and 2 – two policies that argue for a multiculturalism of

integration – both of which are located somewhere between the two poles of assimilation and separation. Following from this, through a discussion of the various ways in which identity and, more specifically, diasporic identity may be understood, I argue that both Liberalism 1 and 2 rely on a problematic static notion of identity. An alternative to a static notion of identity presented here is 'identity as variation'. 'Identity as variation' forwards a non-essentialist understanding of the term where identity is seen to be strategic and reflexive. Therefore, not only does its expression vary in time and place but it also varies in degree. As will be elaborated in the following chapters, this thesis argues that if identity is understood as variation, both Liberalism 1 and 2 in their approaches to managing difference may in fact lead to greater division within a polity. As this thesis seeks to illustrate the difficulties both Liberalism 1 and 2 have in accommodating a variable identity with the deployment of the experience of diasporas, this chapter concludes with an introduction of the term. Here, the reasons for the rise in the usage of the term is examined followed by an discussion of the manner in which diasporas are represented in the discipline of International Relations.

In Chapter Three, contemporary understandings of diasporas are analysed in order to attain a clear characterisation of the term. Highlighting the adequacies and inadequacies of those contemporary understandings of diasporas as well as building on the idea of the notion of identity as variation, an alternative characterisation of diaspora is put forward. The characterisation portrayed here is one that understands membership of a diaspora to be both 'real' and transient. Importantly, with this characterisation of diasporas, the objective of this part of the thesis is to develop the ground for the theoretical assumptions against which the experience may be discussed rather than an attempt to offer *the* definition of diasporas.

Building on the understanding of diasporas as developed in Chapter Three, the following chapters (Chapter Four, Five and Six) deal directly with the diasporic experience of the Chinese, Africans and Jews. The histories presented here are selective and intended to highlight the experience of diasporas. Rather than presenting a full history of the movement of these three diasporas around the world and an account of all their experiences, these chapters are about the Chinese, Africans and Jews *in* history. Admittedly, this will necessarily have to be a partial history and an incomplete snapshot of the social structure of the past. However, the aim is to provide an account that captures the distinctiveness of diasporic life. All three episodes examined in this part of the thesis have in common discussions on the role and nature of identity in the creation and maintenance of diasporas, as well as the part played by the concept of home in identity formation. More precisely, the concept of 'identity as variation' is illustrated through the three episodes. Diasporic identity, this thesis argues, is strategic and reflexive and, as such, varies in time and place and varies in modes of expression. Home for members of a diaspora, as I strive to show in this thesis, may vary as its understanding is always wrapped up in the process of identity formation.

However, as previously noted, these episodes are employed for the dual process of informing the theories on multiculturalism and diasporas discussed as well as to furnish the theories with 'real world' illustrations. Each episode, to a different degree, offers insight into both the diasporic experience and the concept of multiculturalism. Thus, in Chapter Four, the episode of the Chinese diaspora is utilised to shed light on diasporic networks where the transnational collectives of diasporas are most visible as they live in-between the spaces and places of states. The term diaspora as characterised in this thesis is applicable to the Chinese outside

of China and the term is an invaluable theoretical tool through which this transnational community may be understood. The application of this understanding of *diaspora* in analysing the Overseas Chinese not only offers a useful analytical lens through which one can interrogate the character of difference that is generated in the diasporic experience but also captures the flux of diasporic identification and the ephemeral nature of the shared diasporic moment. Diasporic identity is fleeting and it is most obvious when members of the different nodes of the diaspora share a common identity to work together for common goals through diasporic networks.

In Chapter Five, the African experience is surveyed in order to illustrate that the Chinese experience is not unique. Moreover, the African experience reveals that the notion of diaspora should not always be framed in a purely negative way. Although the experience of slavery is a significant moment in the history of the diasporic Africans, a sizable proportion of their dispersal across the globe was also the result of voluntary movement. This point is especially significant as it opens up the analytical space to theorise on contemporary multicultural policies. If diasporas are not portrayed from the outset as disgruntled communities unable or unwilling to have a positive relationship with the communities they find themselves in, this particular approach facilitates the theorising on how harmony may be ultimately achieved.

Chapter Six engages with the Jewish diasporic experience and allows for an appreciation of the view that through the course of their history, Jews and Gentiles were generally successful at living harmoniously together. This part of the thesis argues that it was only when differences were exaggerated and calcified into oppositional positions that there was tension and hostility. Thus, the management of difference is best served through the prevention of the creation of confrontational

and oppositional positions. If identity is understood to be strategic and reflexive and home is a construct where one could find solace, it is best for a multicultural policy to provide the conditions for all within the polity to not merely live in a reluctant peace but also to feel they belong. This chapter concludes that both Liberalism 1 and 2 often fail to achieve this long lasting sense of belonging between different groups. Difference should be recognised but it need not be nonnegotiable and absolute; it is lived and 'real' at a particular moment in time but it need not be absolute and unchanging. Finally, Chapter Seven brings together the findings of this thesis and draws wider conelusions on the implications for the ongoing debate on diasporas and multicultural policies.

Endnotes to Chapter One:

[1] Homer may be seen to have an inconsistent position on the *metrics*. Despite his negative understanding of non-citizens within the Greek polis, he celebrates the seeking of adventure and values the alien and unfamiliar through the character of Odysseus in *Ulysses* (Cohen and Vertovec, 2002: 5).

[2] With regard to the use of the terms short, medium and long-term in this thesis, these terms are used in a similar manner to Fernand Braudel. Braudel applied a three-way division of time in his analysis of the Mediterranean region (1972) and civilisation and capitalism between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries (1992). According to Braudel, the study of history may be divided into the long-term (*la longue durée*), medium-term (social or conjunctural history) and short-term (*l'historie événementielle*). For Braudel, the long-term is viewed from a very long historical lens and the timeframe here spans centuries. Its perspective is 'devoted to a history where passage is almost imperceptible.... a history where change is slow, a history of constant repetition, ever-recurring cycles' (Braudel, 1972: 20). With respect to the medium-term, this standpoint could be understood as 'social history, the history of groups and groupings' where time progressed with 'slow but perceptible rhythms' (Braudel, 1972: 20). This analysis focuses on shorter periods to that of the long-term such as economic systems, states, societies and civilisations. Finally, the short-term is concerned with the 'history of events.... a history of brief, rapid, nervous fluctuations, by definition ultra-sensitive' (Braudel, 1972: 20). For Braudel, this time span by its very nature is the most exciting, as it is 'proportionate to individuals, to daily life, to our illusions, to our hasty awareness – above all the time of the chronicle and the journalist' (Braudel, 1980: 28).

[3] In textualising and questioning the relationship between diasporas and 'hosts', this thesis necessarily engages with the vast sweep of Jewish, African and Chinese migratory history, spanning from the Jewish experience of exile after the destruction of Jerusalem in 586BC, to Chinese travel to the South Seas in the first millennium A.D. and to the dispersion through slavery of the Africans.

[4] It is debatable whether cultural studies can indeed be considered a distinct discipline. The intellectual vibrancy displayed by writers such as Stuart Hall and Paul Gilroy is indicative of cultural studies' ability to 'transgress established boundaries and to create new forms of knowledge and understanding not bound by such boundaries' (Stratton and Ang, 1996: 362)

[5] A similarity may be drawn between what is attempted here and Michael Walzer's understanding of how morality may be divided into maximalist (thick) and minimalist (thin) accounts (Walzer, 1994b). For Walzer, our intuitive understanding of people possessing a universalist thin conception of morality that 'thickens' with age stemming from the community we are embedded in is incorrect. Morality is always 'thick from the beginning, culturally integrated, fully resonant, and it reveals itself thinly only on special occasion, when moral language is turned to specific purposes' (Walzer, 1994b: 4). Therefore, thin conceptions of morality are hastily put together from thick conceptions when there are cross-cultural debates on specific events. In relation to theorising on *diaspora*, the theories used to understand the term are both informed and tested by lived experiences.

Chapter Two: Introduction to the Subject Matter – Multiculturalism and Diasporas in Context

It is somewhat remarkable that while the movement of people has been a ubiquitous characteristic of human existence, living with the differences brought by movement has been far from easy. This thesis engages with two specific theoretical approaches to managing these differences, namely Liberalism 1 and 2. For this purpose, Chapter Two firstly places Liberalism 1 and 2 in the context of the wider multiculturalism debate arguing that both theories find support in a static notion of identity, and secondly, introduces the concept of diaspora in order to allow for a more precise understanding of the notion in question.

Chapter Two is broadly divided into three sections. The first section details the scholarly debate on multiculturalism by employing Will Kymlicka's (2002) four-stage division of the debate (Section 2.1). While acknowledging that such classifying efforts often lie open to criticism, I find Kymlicka's categories particularly useful for the dual purpose of showing: (1) where Liberalism 1 and 2 are located in the greater debate on multiculturalism; and (2) to highlight the conceptualisation of identity Liberalism 1 and 2 are based upon. In the second section (Section 2.2), a discussion on the manner in which the concept of identity is understood in this thesis is offered. As being part of a diaspora, I argue, involves

identification with a community, it is important here to explain what possessing an identity means. It is argued here for identity to be understood as 'variation' thereby acknowledging the possibility for individuals to possess multiple identities that they may express in various degrees and in different combinations at particular times. Through this discussion, I aim to reveal that Liberalism 1 and 2 are based on a static understanding of identity where differences are immutable (Section 2.2.2). As such, Liberalism 1 and 2 may lead to the entrenchment of existing differences in a polity rather than fostering accord as both positions are unable to contend with identity being understood as variation. The final section (Section 2.3) of Chapter Two introduces the concept of diaspora by discussing the rise in prominence of the term as well as the manner in which its various connotations are understood in the literature of International Relations.

2.1 Multiculturalism: A Review

From the perspective of the long-term, most societies, whether acknowledged or not, are multicultural. The term *multicultural* is used here as an adjective and it describes the social demographic of polities where different cultural communities live together and attempt to build a common life whilst preserving their 'original' identity (Hesse, 2000: 2). Furthermore, the multicultural-ness of a specific polity is not unchanging as perceived difference may indeed shift over time. For example, in discussions on a multicultural Britain, the focus is often on the 'new' immigrants arriving in Britain post-1945 whilst the previous multicultural Britain comprising the political union of the Scottish, English and Welsh is often oddly absent. The point here is that the

debate concerning difference at a particular moment in time for a polity may shift, thus resulting in the same polity possessing a different multicultural demographic.

The notion of *multiculturalism* used here is substantive and it is employed in reference to the different policies adopted by various polities to manage their multicultural constitutions however it may be understood (Hesse, 2000: 2). In this context of multiculturalism, 'language, history or religion – any combination of which are sometimes referred to as "ethnicity" – are frequent markers of distinct culture' which require some form of management within a polity (Okin, 1998: 662). For example, Britain, New Zealand and Singapore are multicultural societies that have different approaches to their condition. Discussions on the assortment of different multiculturalisms are made even more complex when one considers the fact that different political philosophies do not champion a particular orientation towards multiculturalism – liberals, communitarians and conservatives, for example, differ amongst themselves on the political stance that their philosophies support. As a result, there are many different types of multicultural society and there is no single doctrine of multiculturalism. The following section further elaborates on the complex notion of multiculturalism with reference to the work of Will Kymlicka.

2.1.1 *Four Stages of the Debate on Multiculturalism*

Tracing the development of the scholarly debate on multiculturalism, Will Kymlicka (2002) identifies four stages, or main themes. All four stages, or themes, in the debate on multiculturalism identified by Kymlicka revolve more or less directly around the question of the justice of special group rights that, in practice, translate into unequal rights along cultural lines within polities. The focus of this section,

however, is less to do with the justice of unequal rights as such but is instead with the location of Liberalism 1 and 2 in the scholarly literature.

During the first stage of debate on multiculturalism, Kymlicka argues, the main issue debated was between proponents of communitarianism and defenders of liberal individualism (Kymlicka, 2002: 336). During the formative years of this debate, political philosophers discussing multiculturalism found correspondence between their debate and the discussion between proponents of liberalism and communitarianism[1]. Throughout this stage of debate, the prevailing assumption was that one's position on multiculturalism was dependent upon and derived from one's position on the liberal/communitarian divide. Some liberals rejected multiculturalism as an unnecessary and dangerous departure from the proper emphasis on the individual (Narveson 1991; Hartney 1991). For liberals against multiculturalism, the individual was considered morally prior to the community and the community was seen to matter only when it had an effect on the well-being of the individuals who comprised it. For many of the communitarians, multiculturalism was considered a necessity as it protected communities from the corrosive effects of cultural autonomy (Garet, 1983; Taylor, 1994). Communitarians often defended special minority group rights with reference to the intrinsic value of 'communally minded minority groups [threatened by] the encroachment of liberal individualism' (Kymlicka, 2002: 337). It was argued that what was at stake here was 'the survival and flourishing of ways of life' (Okin, 1998: 663). This divide which dominated the first stage of the debate on multiculturalism may be seen as the embryonic stage of the debate prior to its shift towards a more explicit divide between Liberalism 1 (mild) and Liberalism 2 (hard) and their specific positions on multiculturalism. Further elaboration of this point will follow below.

According to Kymlicka, in the second stage of the debate on multiculturalism, the issue shifted from a discussion on the methods by which communal minority groups could be protected from liberal individualism towards the question whether liberalism possessed the theoretical space to honour the pluralism demanded by multiculturalism (Kymlicka, 2002: 338-343). In defence of the 'hard' liberal position on multiculturalism, liberal culturalists such as Joseph Raz (1994) and Will Kymlicka (1989, 1995) argued that the individual autonomy cherished by liberals requires a respect for culture (Kymlicka, 1989: 4, 162). For liberal culturalists, cultural membership is seen to be a Rawlsian primary good where 'the autonomy of individuals – their ability to make good choices amongst good lives – is intimately tied up with access to their culture, with the prosperity and flourishing of their culture, and with the respect accorded their culture by others' (Kymlicka, 2002: 339). Moreover, 'there are compelling interests related to culture and identity which are fully consistent with liberal principles of freedom and equality, and which justify granting special rights to minorities' (Kymlicka, 2002: 339). Consequently, it was necessary for liberal states to adopt a policy of multiculturalism akin to Liberalism 2 as liberal theory demanded a respect for culture. One of the main objections to the liberal culturalist position raised by proponents of Liberalism 1 is the argument that some forms of minority rights undermine, rather than support, individual autonomy. For example, women entering the work force because of equal economic opportunity go against cultures that value the special role of women in the home and family (Kelly, 2001: 429). In response to this objection, Kymlicka claims that minority rights are consistent with his position if the freedoms of individuals within the group are protected alongside the

promotion of equality between minority and majority groups (Kymlicka, 1995: 80-82).

According to Kymlicka, the third stage of the debate on multiculturalism surrounds the role of the liberal state in the practice of multiculturalism (Kymlicka, 2000: 343-347). Within this debate, those opposed to minority group rights argue for the liberal state to practise a policy of multiculturalism along the lines of Liberalism 1 where the state is difference-blind and indifferent to the ability of cultural groups to reproduce over time (Kymlicka, 2002: 332). Culture, like religion, is argued to be of no concern to the state as it is something the people of a polity pursue in the private sphere. In this libertarian form of 'mild' multiculturalism, the state should neither endorse nor support the ways of life or the social reproduction of various cultural groups. Instead, the state is promoted as a rigorously neutral one that defends individual rights but does not pursue collective goals 'beyond the personal freedom and physical security, welfare, and safety of its citizens' (Walzer, 1994a: 99). The clearest example, according to Michael Walzer, of such a state is the United States where there is no constitutionally recognised official language (Walzer, 1994a: 100-1). States indifferent to the cultural identities of its citizens are referred to as 'civic nations' where membership is defined purely in terms of the adherence to certain principles of democracy and justice (Ignatieff, 1993; Pfaff, 1993). In contrast, states that pursue the creation of particular cultures are described as 'ethnic nations' of an inherently nonliberal nature. Those that champion special minority group rights have responded to this challenge and have argued that a state that is difference-blind or neutral simply perpetuates the unequal status quo. This inequality can only be rectified through group representation and dialogue (Parekh, 1995, 2000; Young, 1990). Indeed, for Bhikhu Parekh, key to a successful multicultural

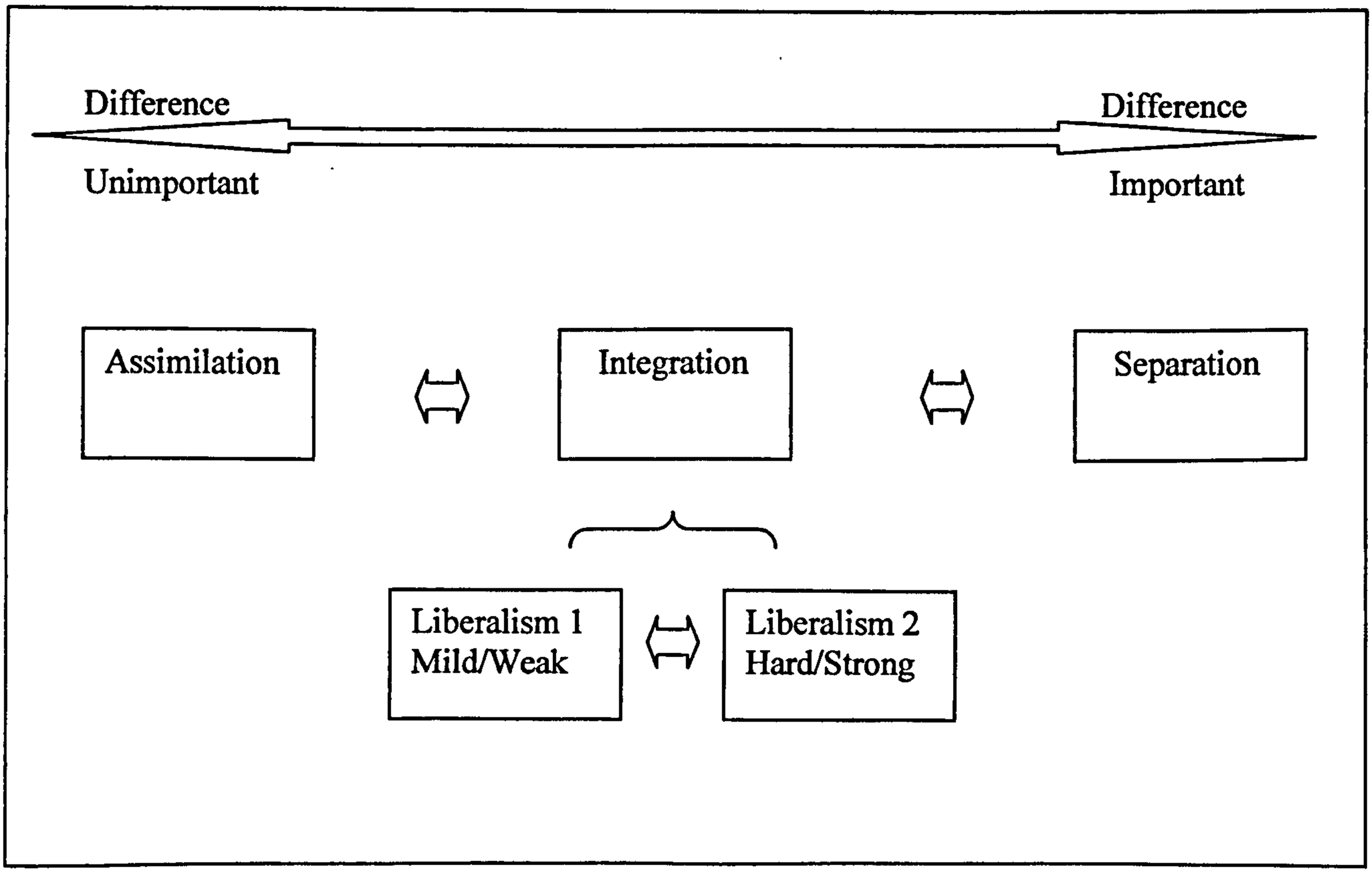
policy is not the protection of specific groups but the ability to allow for open dialogue between various groups in a polity in order to enable them to work out a solution that is acceptable to all. However, there need not be a clean resolution to these dialogues as Parekh envisages new challenges to perpetually come forward.

In the fourth and final stage of the debate on multiculturalism, the discussion revolves around the threat posed by multiculturalism to the civic virtues required for the functioning and stability of a healthy democracy (Kymlicka, 2002: 366). Those who oppose 'hard' multiculturalism, represented by liberal thinkers such as Brian Barry and David Miller, hold that 'the nation – particularly in its shared cultural core – is necessary for effecting integration in liberal democratic societies and that the nation, culturally understood, is therefore necessary for well-functioning democracy' (Abizadeh, 2002: 495). Opponents of 'hard' multiculturalism argue that special minority group rights lead to the politicisation of ethnicity and any measures which heighten the salience of ethnicity in the public sphere are divisive (Kymlicka, 2002: 366). Over time, such policies will inevitably lead to a spiral of competition, distrust and antagonism between ethnic groups. Proponents of minority group rights such as Kymlicka have absorbed this challenge and argue that states should be able to promote integration through the creation of a 'societal culture' that does not exclude the state's ability to protect minority groups. Societal culture here is understood to be a thin culture where 'a territorially concentrated culture, centred on a shared language which is used in a wide range of societal institutions' is created by the state to promote cohesiveness (Kymlicka, 1995: 76). Such a culture 'does not preclude differences in religion, personal values, family relationships, or lifestyle choices (Kymlicka, 2002: 347).

2.1.2 *Multiculturalism: A Summary*

From Kymlicka's four stage division of the debate, it is possible to arrive at three general positions on multiculturalism: assimilation, integration (hard and mild) and separation. The various polices through which difference has been managed may be located within the continuum of assimilation on one extreme and separation on the other. Located somewhere between assimilation and separation, this thesis assesses Liberalism 1 and 2 – two policies that advocate a politics of multiculturalism through integration – via the experience of diasporas. The diagram below (Fig. 1) illustrates the continuum in which these theories on multiculturalism may be placed. In the diagram, these theories have been located on the continuum based on their regard for difference and the importance they place on individual and group identity.

(Fig. 1) <u>The Multiculturalism Continuum</u>:



On one extreme of the continuum lies assimilation. Assimilation into the dominant culture of a particular polity as a form of multiculturalism has its roots in both liberal and socialist traditions. For both liberals and Marxists of the nineteenth century, the smaller nationalities were backward and stagnant. Modernity was for them only to be experienced if they abandoned their identity and assimilated into those of the larger, more successful nations. For an example of the traditional liberal view on the need for assimilation, consider John Stuart Mill's position on minority cultures:

> Experience proves it is possible for one nationality to merge and be absorbed in another: and when it was originally an inferior and backward portion of the human race the absorption is greatly to its advantage. Nobody can suppose that it is not more beneficial to a Breton, or a Basque of French Navarre, to be brought into the current ideas and feelings of a highly civilised and cultivated people – to be a member of the French nationality, admitted on equal terms to all the privileges of French citizenship.... than to sulk on his own rocks, the half-savage relic of past times, revolving in his own little mental orbit, without participation or interest in the general movement of the world. The same remark applies to the Welshman or the Scottish Highlander as members of the British nation. (Mill, 1991: 431).

Marxists were no more receptive to the idea of rights for minority cultures as they considered the proletariat to possess no nationality. For Marxists, cultural and national divisions were considered a 'speed bump' on the road to world citizenship. As noted by Engels,

> There is no country in Europe which does not have in some corner or other one or several fragments of peoples, the remnants of a former population that was suppressed and held in bondage by another nation which later became

the main vehicle for historical development. These relics of nations, mercilessly trampled down by the passage of history.... always become the standard bearers of counterrevolution and remain so until their complete expiration or loss of national character, just as their whole existence in general is itself a protest against a great historical revolution, Such in Scotland are the Gaels... such in France are the Bretons... such in Spain are the Basques (cited in Nimni, 1995: 70).

With their expectation for individuals and groups to abandon their identities by taking on that of the dominant group, proponents of this form of multiculturalism viewed difference and identity as unimportant.

The antithesis of assimilation is separation. Located on the other end of the multiculturalism continuum, separation may be conceived in three divergent forms that are united by the fundamental belief that the differences between groups are insurmountable. Such a position views individual and group identity as immutable and important. The first form of separation holds that as differences between groups cannot be overcome, the only avenue left for political manoeuvre is a rigidly segregated polity – that is, apartheid. The aim is to keep the 'Other' apart in order to purify and enclose a particular group identity. The second form of separation calls for political, economic and social autonomy. For most separatist movements, this calls for the establishment of a separate sovereign state. For example, this logic propelled the creation of Pakistan and is at the forefront of the argument for the creation of Khalistan in the Punjab. This form of separation would represent the abandonment of any possibility of multiculturalism, driven by a freezing of group differences into unbridgeable binary opposition. Through the third from of separation, the separatist impulse need not always be negative and may take shape in the form of positive self-assertion and self-help. This may be seen in the creation of

institutions or practises that revolve around the assisting of specific groups. For example, Chinese clan associations played a major role in establishing business contacts, emotional and financial support during the colonial period in Southeast Asia. Regardless of the form separation takes, it accepts an understanding of identity that presupposes a core notion of difference that is effectively essentialist. Not only is difference within a group ignored but difference between groups is petrified.

Finally, multiculturalism may take the form of integration. It is possible to subdivide the many formulations of multiculturalism of integration into 'hard' to 'mild' (Citrin *et al.* 2001: 250). Similarly, Ralph Grillo (2000) usefully distinguishes between 'strong' and 'weak' multiculturalism. Both hard/strong and mild/weak positions are united in their view that culture, understood as 'a coherent cluster of beliefs, values, habits and observances' (Citrin *et al.* 2001: 249) is a natural and, therefore, desirable accompaniment of ethnic and national diversity within a single polity. For both positions, collective identity is part and parcel of natural human existence that can neither be abandoned at a whim nor need necessarily be opposed to each other. The critical distinction between the two versions rests with their stance towards concrete measures to institutionalise cultural differences in politics. 'Hard' multiculturalism maintains that the very purpose of politics is to affirm group difference (Miller, 1995: 132). Therefore, proponents of this end of the continuum on the whole support the protection of minority group rights through institutional recognition of cultural difference in the public sphere including political representation. 'Mild' multiculturalism, although acknowledging the diversity of cultures within a polity, holds that the business of states does not extend into cultural matters. Instead, cultural diversity is recognised to be in the private sphere. For such a neutral state, the only assimilation expected from all its members is that they

accept the idea of the neutral state in the public sphere. Therefore, a degree of assimilation is expected of immigrants and ethnic minorities in the public sphere of law and government, the market, education and employment. The assimilation demanded of all members of the polity is an acceptance of the liberal political culture that enables the 'benign neglect' (Kukathas, 1997: 423-424) practised by the state – a neglect that allows a political society to be 'an association of individuals and groups living under the rule of law but pursuing separate ends or purposes' (Kukathas, 1998: 696).[2]

Expressed in another form, the difference between hard/strong and soft/weak multiculturalism is found in Michael Walzer's division of theories on multiculturalism into Liberalism 1 and Liberalism 2 (Walzer, 1994a: 99). Liberalism 1 (i.e. 'mild' multiculturalism) 'is committed in the strongest possible way to individual rights and, almost as a deduction from this, to a rigorously neutral state… a state without… any sort of collective goals beyond the personal freedom and physical security, welfare, and safety of its citizens' (Walzer, 1994a: 99). Liberalism 2 (i.e. 'hard' multiculturalism) 'allows for a state to be committed to the survival and flourishing of a particular nation, culture or religion, or of a (limited) set of nations, cultures, and religions – so long as the basic rights of citizens who have different commitments or no such commitments at all are protected' (Walzer, 1994a: 99).

The form of integration put forward through Liberalism 1 has been defended by some of the more prominent liberal philosophers in contemporary times. Names that may be associated with this perspective would include Ronald Dworkin and John Rawls (Rawls, 1971, Dworkin, 1979). This position acknowledges that different people have different conceptions of the good life. As there can be no way to discern between who has the correct conception, there is a commitment to treat

everyone fairly and equally regardless of how one's ends are perceived. The commitment to treat everyone equally and fairly has led others to refer to such a position as 'procedural'. From such a position, the role of the state is limited to that of ensuring equal respect whilst remaining uncommitted to forwarding one specific conception of the good life (Taylor, 1994: 56). Rooted to this view is the philosophy of Kant where human dignity is tied to individual autonomy to determine for oneself his/her own life. Thus, multiculturalism in the form of integration as conceptualised in Liberalism 1 emerges from the legally protected autonomy of the individual by the state. The state deals equally with all, and the citizens deal fairly with each other. A facet of this form of multiculturalism is that the state guarantees a broad spectrum of cultural identities but it does not guarantee the survival of any. Intervention by the state to ensure the survival of specific cultural groups would run counter to its stance on remaining neutral.

Integration through Liberalism 2 is a position more commonly associated with communitarians such as Michael Walzer, Charles Taylor and Will Kymlicka. There are many formulations of Liberalism 2 but a general feature shared by all is that the state is not required to remain neutral on particular cultural values. Motivated by a belief in the importance of the role played by cultural identity as a means through which people understand the world, this perspective allows for the state to advocate certain values as long as: (1) basic rights such as free speech and association are protected; (2) no one is coerced into accepting the values that are represented in public institutions; and (3) public officials are democratically accountable in principle and practise (Gutmann, 1994: 11). As such, it is a position that distinguishes itself from the more procedural nature of Liberalism 1 by being openly in support of differences through the defence of specific cultural differences

(Taylor, 1994: 61). For Taylor, cultural differences cannot influence the manner in which, for example, *habeas corpus* is determined, but a polity should be allowed to 'weigh the importance of the uniform treatment of individuals against the importance of cultural survival, and opt sometimes in the favour of the latter' (Taylor, 1994: 61). Following this position,

> Multiculturalism constructs society as composed of a hegemonic homogenous majority, and small minorities with their own essentially different communities and cultures which have to be understood, accepted and basically left alone – since their differences are compatible with the hegemonic culture – in order for the society to have harmonious relations (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1992: 158).

Recognising that in the contemporary world more and more states are becoming multicultural, this position argues that states will have to take into account having more and more cultural groups demanding their survival. This is important to note, as Liberalism 2 does not shut out the possibility of a polity opting for Liberalism 1 through democratic consensus. In Walzer's view, this is what the United States has done as it recognises itself as a polity of immigrants where each culture has to fend for itself with the state remaining uncommitted to supporting particular cultural projects (Walzer, 1994a).

2.2 Conceptualising Identity

To reiterate, the tension that lies between Liberalism 1 and 2 is that Liberalism 1 assumes the protection of collective identities comes into competition with the right to equal individual liberties. On the one hand, the 'mild' multiculturalism of

Liberalism 1 holds that cultural differences exist but as its practise falls within the domain of the private sphere the state should not meddle with it. Moreover, the protection of collective identities is incompatible with equal individual liberties. On the other hand, the 'hard' multiculturalism championed by Liberalism 2 holds that culture – understood as 'a coherent cluster of beliefs, values, habits and observances' (Citrin *et al.* 2001: 249) – is worthy of protection within a liberal polity.[3] Furthermore, for Liberalism 2, different cultures are not only worthy of protection but as a Rawlsian primary good their protection is coherent with liberal philosophy.

As the protection of collective identities seems to require the abandonment of the right to equal individual liberties, Liberalism 1 and 2 seem to remain in perpetual tension. What results is that liberals like Rawls and Dworkin appeal for an ethically neutral legal order that is supposed to ensure everyone the opportunity to pursue their own notion of the good life whilst communitarians such as Walzer, Kymlicka and Taylor appeal for the state to intervene in order to ensure the survival of specific conceptions of the good life. In order to bridge the chasm between the two perspectives, one could suggest an alternative focus surrounding the management of difference. It may be argued that Liberalism 1 and 2 have asked the wrong questions in seeking to resolve the difficulties surrounding integration. Both positions assume that difference just 'is' and set about forwarding answers without spending enough time on the 'why' of differences. Both Liberalism 1 and 2 do not take into consideration why difference comes about or how this difference may be expressed. Both positions view difference in its various guises as one and the same and hold that all differences have to be managed in a blanket manner. For example, in their approach to manage the presence of a Jewish community in a polity, both Liberalism

1 and 2 begin with the same essentialist understanding of Jewish-ness. The Jews are viewed to have no internal differences – there is a static unifying Jewish identity possessed by all who are Jewish. From this understanding of Jewish-ness, Liberalism 1 and 2 part ways in their approach to managing Jewish difference. For Liberalism 1, the neutral state should not protect this 'special' Jewish culture and should instead protect the Jews as individuals just as any other non-Jewish member of the polity. In the eyes of Liberalism 2, the 'special' Jewish qualities possessed by all Jews should be protected.

As such, both Liberalism 1 and 2 look towards a solution that either ignores all difference or seeks to reify it due to their underlying static understanding of identity where differences are immutable. Following from this, it may be argued that Liberalism 1 and 2 may lead to the entrenchment of existing differences in a polity rather than fostering accord as both positions are unable to contend with identity being understood as variation. In this section, the difficulties associated with having the static understanding of identity of Liberalism 1 and 2 is discussed. Furthermore, it is argued here that differences between groups vary by degree dependent upon the circumstances at hand. To use the example of the diasporic Africans, Black-ness may be non-confrontational in the sense of being partial to a particular way of dress or diet. It may then become more visible when used as a banner under which those of the same identity gather to conduct, for example, business. At its most extreme, Black-ness may take the form of a call for separation where differences have become so 'real' that the only option is to separate from the 'Others' of a polity.

2.2.1 *Two Conception of Identity: Essentialism and Variation*

Don't care where you from
As long as you are a black man
You're an African.
- Peter Tosh

I am inescapably Chinese by descent. I am only sometimes Chinese by consent. When and how is a matter of politics.
- Ien Ang

In contemporary times, the concept of identity has been made exceedingly problematic. In a way, the shift in thinking about identity has been from addressing 'what am I' to 'who am I'. Descartes' *cogito ergo sum* addresses the first question – I am a thinking thing – but does not address the issues of the second. Even if one is comfortable in asking (or ignoring) questions of our existence, problems remain in understanding group identity, that is, who, how and why 'we' maintain this identity to ourselves and to others. The experience of diasporic identity brings to light how the 'we' is relational and context-sensitive and may vary over time and place. 'We' are what 'we' are depending on the situation faced and the interaction with 'Others'.

The quotes above articulate the two main ways in thinking about identity. The first position as expressed by one of the Wailers is one that holds cultural identity in terms of one shared culture, a collective held together by a true essence or self. This self hides behind many other 'selves' that are artificial or imposed and which people of common ancestry and history all possess. Essentialist arguments usually appeal to some form of kinship or a 'greater chain of being' that allows individuals to have singular identities. Furthermore, individuals are essentially

linked to collectives – tied by some core essence between the collective and possessed by no one else (Calhoun, 1994: 13). Such claims usually invoke race, nation, class or some other identity to reinforce their argument. By this definition, 'our cultural identities reflect the common historical experiences and shared cultural codes which provide us, as one people, with stable unchanging and continuous frames of reference and meaning, beneath the shifting divisions and vicissitudes of our actual history' (Hall, 1990: 223). With such a perspective of identity, members of a diaspora are tied to one another through an essence however defined. This 'oneness' underlies all the other superficial differences and allows anyone 'as long as you are a black man' to be an African. Essentialism of this sort is very much along the same vein as Platonic thought that regresses back to the search for a 'true Black-ness' or 'true Jewish-ness'.

The essentialist position leads to ontological and epistemological difficulties. The nub of the issue lies in the two-fold problem of the identity and identification of a subject. With regard to the identity of the subject, the essentialist argument suffers from its over-emphasis on roots and the desire to reduce difference to simple binary opposites. It draws clear frontiers of us/them but lacks the explanatory power in identifying why and how 'us' and 'them' become formed. Additionally, it is also unable to explain how 'us' and 'them' can undergo change. As such, it falters on the ontological stumbling block of having to fully capture the identity of the subject. With regard to its inability to explain identity formation, essentialist claims are weakened through the work of people such as Benedict Anderson and Eric Hobsbawm (Anderson, 1991, Hobsbawm, 1990). Their work emphasises the social creation of collective identity through the manipulation of concepts such as nation and ethnicity. The inability to explain change is illustrated in the difficulty Israel has

with its Law of Return since it was passed in 1950. This law guarantees Israeli citizenship to all Jews who wish to reside in Israel. Deferring religious and ethnic definitions have led to endless disputes. Thus, a person recognised as a Jew for purposes of citizenship may not be recognised as a Jew by the Orthodox rabbis in Israel. The problem is demonstrated by the case of the Deriev family who were refused citizenship after leaving the former Soviet Union for Israel as they were ethnically Jewish but religiously Catholic (Schmemann, Pg. 212 – 213).

Epistemological problems in the essentialist understanding of identity may be attributed to the difficulty in providing a conceptual scheme able to identify the essence within the subject. Firstly, the position assumes there are distinct boundaries easily identifiable between groups. The essentialist understanding of identity faces the perpetual problem of those that do not 'fit' the supposed stereotype. There are always those of 'mixed' parentage, those who have 'spent too long over there' or those who do not support the right cricket team. The difficulty in pinpointing and maintaining strict cultural boundaries is becoming increasingly apparent and one can think of multiple possibilities: the Jewish teenager who listens to Reggae music, plays rugby and wears 'street wear' more commonly associated with Black inner city Americans, or the Indian computer programmer working in Silicon Valley who plays baseball, reads the *Marharbarata* and *Economist*, or the Chinese businessman who sends his children to British public schools, who supports Liverpool Football Club but is an active member of his dialect group's clan. The blurring of boundaries is more and more prevalent and attempts to re-erect them may become increasingly impossible. These epistemological problems are reflected when one attempts to pin down the shared essence of those of a specific diaspora. For example, for the Jews, one is forced to make difficult decisions on the essence of Jewish-ness where

identified possibilities lead to a downward spiral of constant qualification. If it is based on the practise of Judaism, what form of Judaism should it be and who should be the judge? If based on a common line of descent, one is forced to contend with whether it should be matrilineal, patrilineal or both. Secondly, the position assumes that there are no differences within groups. It reduces the differences between groups to simple generalised categories that have no relation to actual social relations by trapping individuals into fixed categories. For example, all Jews become one and the same or all Chinese people have the same outlook in life.

Essentialism may sometimes come in the guise of social constructivism in its belief that identity is not given but is socially constructed. This occurs when analyses in the constructivist vein narrow the role of agency and substitute the biology of essentialism with social pressure (Calhoun, 1994: 16 – 17). Therefore, the agency of the subject is removed in identity formation, making society the sole mechanism at work. This may be seen in Sartre's discussion on Jewish identity (Sartre, 1995). For Sartre, the 'Jew' is an individual who others take to be a Jew; it is the anti-Semite who creates the Jew (Sartre, 1995: 69). Here, the Jew is an image devoid of content, he neither exists juridically nor as a self-willed presence (Sartre, 1995: 135). Therefore, the Jew is no longer seen as sharing the same fate, race or faith with other Jews. He is rather the phantom victim of an absolute tendency to exclude the other. Despite these theoretical criticisms of the essentialist position, this definition of identity should not be simply dismissed due to its theoretical difficulties, as 'creative rediscovery' played a vital role throughout the post-colonial struggle. As such, it still provides an important method through which marginalized people can represent themselves. As recognised by Hall, though one can criticise the essentialist position of the Nation of Islam, if it is the only organisation that can

protect Black kids from the Los Angeles police, a little 'strategic essentialism' cannot be totally unjustifiable (Hall, 1997: 35).

In the second quotation, Ien Ang, a Chinese academic born in Indonesia to Chinese parents and raised in Holland, expresses an alternative manner in which the nature of identity may be understood. For Ang, identity is not seen to have a true essence but is instead part of a process of being and becoming (Kwong, 1997: 180). This manner of understanding identity acknowledges the role played by creativity and imagination in its construction. Despite this acknowledgement, this does not plunge the position into a meaningless relativism but finds grounding through history.[4] Therefore, Ang cannot escape from the fact that she is Chinese through her history but when and how she is perceived as such is a complex process of assimilation, resistance and negotiation. The search for identity always entails the search for origins and the representation of those origins. An important component of this search is not purely the discovery of tradition as it involves a process of invention. Identities have histories and are not pulled out from the air but akin to everything that is historical, they go though a process of continuous transformation (Hall, 1990: 225). The epistemological position of such an understanding is a critical one, seeking to infiltrate the 'real' as a means to highlight relations of 'power and contradictions, of domination and struggle' (Gossberg, 1996: 153). Far from being predetermined by an essentialist past, it is subjected to power relations in the guise of culture and history. This reflexive understanding of identity frames diasporic identity in continuous development where choices are made based on the identificational avenues open to an individual.

The context-sensitive nature of group identity where perceived differences are not absolute but an ongoing negotiation and transformation between one's

history and one's circumstances is what Derrida in another context refers to as *différance* (Derrida, 1982). Meaning, for Derrida, is similar to what is being argued for here in relation to identity. Both have no fixed origin or final destination but are always in process. It cannot be essentialised and can only be relationally determined. This entails a constant movement where no meaning is absolutely fixed but neither is it completely free. There are no absolute differences that remain constant between what is permanently the same and what is permanently the 'Other'. Instead, it is a 'weave' of similarities and differences that refuses to be pinned down and is forced to remain in fixed binary opposition. The play of *différance* is limited though by the 'structural limits of our mastery – what is most irreducible about our "era"' (Derrida, 1982: 7). Where one begins is the time and place of where 'we' are, even though where 'we' can only be known on the basis of *différance* and its history. The effect that this situation produces is one where *différance* is itself 'enmeshed, carried off, reinscribed, just as a false entry or a false exit is still part of the game, a function of the system' (Derrida, 1982: 27).

The articulation of one's identity is a reaction to political, social and cultural interplay in one's environment. What has been said before affects what is said now. It is not a passive experience as it involves the element of agency in its articulation. This definition of identity is appealing as it avoids the theoretical problems of seeking to explain a transcendental core essence in one's identity without rooting it in the other extreme position of cultural relativism. Additionally, it has the theoretical capacity to explain the development and changes to one's identity. Finally, it openly acknowledges the heterogeneity of social difference understood as contextually experienced relations (Young, 1995: 155-176). Therefore, such a critical understanding of identity arguably avoids the epistemological pitfalls of

essentialism by understanding identity as a relation between conceptual and empirical reality in constant movement between various levels of abstraction. It also avoids plunging into harsh relativism as identity is measured against the context of historical struggles. In this light, members of a diaspora possess a fluid identity that is no less 'genuine' than any others.

It is important to note that although a substantial portion of one's identity is imagined and that difference is constructed, this neither reduces an individual to a choice-making liberal atom nor ties an identity to petrified binary opposition. Diasporic identity is neither an identity that an individual lifts off a well-stocked shelf nor is it one that is immutable. Articulated crudely, understanding group and individual identity in such a manner would straddle a position somewhere between Will Kymlicka's culturally embedded self and Jeremy Waldron's cosmopolitan alternative (Kymlicka, 1989, 1995; Waldron, 1992, 1995). In Kymlicka's understanding of identity, as all individuals are born into cultural communities, the self is 'culturally embedded' – an individual is forced to understand the world through the culture he/she finds him/herself in (Kymlicka, 1995: 84-85). Effectively, Kymlicka's position is influenced by a communitarianism that has an essentialist lilt. His position has difficulty explaining the unique nature of the essence conferred to each generation of a particular culture and it does not acknowledge the play of *différance* between groups in the creation of group distinctiveness. For Kymlicka, individuals understand themselves through the cultural narratives on offer and then navigate life using those given cultural tools.

Differing from Kymlicka, Waldron forwards a more liberal understanding of identity that de-emphasises the deep bonds shared by a people stemming from their shared language and culture. He suggests individuals have the ability to question and

revise their inherited way of life (Waldron, 1995: 93-114). A creation of liberal philosophy and modernity, Waldron's cosmopolitan

> refuses to think of himself *defined* by his location or his ancestry or his citizenship or his language.... he may live in San Francisco....be of Irish ancestry.... learns Spanish, eats Chinese, wears clothes made in Korea, listens to Verdi sung by a Maori Princess on Japanese equipment, follows Ukrainian politics, and practices Buddhist meditation techniques.... [he is] conscious of living in a mixed up world and having a mixed up self (Waldron, 1995: 95).

Waldron's position faces two thorny issues. The first stems from his understanding of hybridisation that may over exaggerate the scope of choice by being overzealous in removing the boundaries of identity. Although the boundaries of identity are best described as hazy, that does not mean its boundaries may be removed completely. Identity does not remove the historical value of binary positions. These binary positions are related to power and its mobilization is an attempt at closing something that is open. For example, just because there is no absolute distinction between Black and White does not mean that there are no situations where everything is assembled to construct such a difference (Hall, 1997:36). Although what was attempted under apartheid in South Africa cannot be condoned – where sharp distinctions were enforced between the binary of Black and White – it may not be possible to conclude that anyone may be anything. People in the world experience the construction of difference daily but Waldron's position ignores complex histories and geographies. Thus, this results in an extreme version of cosmopolitanism and cultural diffusion. The second difficult issue for Waldron's position is its failure to clarify the nature of this cosmopolitanism. For example, is it

arguable that the experience of cosmopolitanism in a politics department of a British university would be the same kind of cosmopolitanism as that of a Thai construction worker in Singapore? If Kymlicka's culturally embedded self has focussed too much on the roots of identity, Waldron's position has focussed too much on the routes.

Neither Kymlicka's simple binary opposition of us/them nor Waldron's choice-making individual is able to satisfactorily explain diasporic identity. Bearing in mind the inadequacies of both Kymlicka and Waldron's understanding of identity, identity and diasporic identification in this thesis is understood as an open-ended theoretical concept that despite not being fixed is not non-specific either (Hall 1990, 1995, 1997, O'Toole 1997, Cohen, P., 1999). Diasporic identity is a complex 'matrix of economic, political and cultural inter-relationships which construct a commonality between the various components of a dispersed group' (Brah, 1996: 196). This complex matrix does not collapse into a loose, free-floating thing as history limits how much and how far it can float. Identity becomes invented through a network of both recollection as well as imagination – the remembering of the past and the inventing of the future. Perhaps a fruitful way of looking at diasporic identity and identity in general would be comparing it to a set of Lego toy blocks. What can be constructed with those blocks is left to the imagination of the builder but it is also restricted in a sense by the specific manner in which the blocks bind themselves to each other. More succinctly, one can create anything but only within the confines of the materials given. Such a position acknowledges the internal differences within a group without undermining that group's reality – group boundaries are seen to be porous and flexible where identity is understood as 'a process of identification, a partly voluntary, partly contradictory, always constructed set of multiple ties to a group or groups' (Gordon and Newfield, 1996: 78).[5]

2.2.2 *The difficulties posed for Liberalism 1 and 2 by understanding identity as variation*

From these two understandings of identity, it is possible to argue that theories in support of both 'mild' and 'strong' forms of multiculturalism in the manner of Liberalism 1 and 2 for the most part are based upon an essentialist understanding of identity. Difference for both Liberalism 1 and 2 just 'is' without, however, providing an explicit explanation of why differences exist or an appreciation for their varying degrees of expression. For both Liberalism 1 and 2, culture, identity and difference is a kind of package (often talked of as migrants' 'cultural baggage') of collective behavioural-moral-aesthetic traits and 'customs' transmitted between generations and largely unaffected by history or of a change of context (Vertovec, 2001: 2). This cultural identity and the difference it brings instils a discrete quality into the feelings, values, practices, social relationships, predilections and intrinsic nature of all who 'belong to (a particular) it' (Vertovec, 1996: 51). This essentialised understanding of culture and identity has not been confined to the realms of theoretical discussion. It has been observed over the past few decades in multicultural programmes and frameworks in areas such as educational curricula, media images, forums of 'ethnic community leadership', public funding mechanisms, and professional training courses and handbooks (for instance, in police or social services). Examination of the cultural essentialism in multicultural policies has been made in Canada (Kobayashi, 1993), Australia (Castles *et al.* 1988), Mauritius (Eriksen, 1997), United States (Turner, 1993), Germany (Radtke, 1994), Sweden (Ålund and Schierup, 1991) and Britain (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1993).

There are several difficulties faced by Liberalism 1 and 2 arising from their essentialist conceptions of identity and these difficulties may force both theories to miss the mark in promoting social corporation and cohesion. As will be explained in the following, there is one general problem faced by both Liberalism 1 and 2 originating from their failure to appreciate the mutability and variability of identity and two more specific difficulties related more directly to each theory. Due to the desire of a theory on multiculturalism to allow for cohesion and mutual respect despite difference, it is the first more general problem that is perhaps the more pressing one. By not taking into account how identity may vary in place and time, both Liberalism 1 and 2 approach the difficult task of fostering societal cohesion in an overly pessimistic manner. Both positions at their core foreclose the possibility for different groups interacting in a positive manner by viewing inter-group relations as inevitably conflictual. As such, in the case of Liberalism 1, difference is to be ignored and the best to be hoped is for groups to pursue their different ends whilst living under the rule of law. In the case of Liberalism 2, difference cannot be ignored and the best solution for the unavoidable conflict it breeds is to hermetically seal difference between groups. In effect, it may be argued that both positions do no actually resolve the problems arising through difference but seek to hold off the difficulties posed by it for as long as possible. This pessimistic approach to managing difference is unfortunate as relationships between groups may run a whole gamut of possibilities. In illustration of this point, in biology, there are at least six forms of interaction between species: (1) neutralism, where neither party affects the other; (2) competition, where each disadvantages the other; (3) amensalism, where one party is disadvantaged whilst the other is unaffected; (4) parasitism and predation, where one party is disadvantaged and the other is advantaged; (5)

commensalism, where one is advantaged and the other is unaffected; and (6) protocooperation and mutualism, where both parties benefit (Mahon and McGrath, 1975: 388).[6] Of course some relationships within the six possibilities listed here are more conducive to social cohesion than others but by focussing purely on conflict between different groups both Liberalism 1 and 2 seem to disregard the possibility for a more agreeable form of interaction to take place.

A corollary of this pessimistic approach to multiculturalism is that differences may become entrenched and change is frozen. Owing to the neutral state demanded by Liberalism 1, including its difference-blind approach to dealing with multiculturalism, and coupled with its pessimistic outlook on inter-group relations, it is conceivable that minorities who are not seen to 'fit in' in the little amount of assimilation demanded may be conceived as deviant. As observed by Adrian Favell,

> ...[E]thnic minorities are offered cultural tolerance, even 'multicultural' rights and institutions, in exchange for acceptance of basic principles and the rule of law; they are imagined as culturally-laden social groups, who need to be integrated and individualised by a public sphere which offers voice and participation, transforming them from 'immigrants', into full and free 'citizens'; they are to become full, assimilated nationals, in a nation-state re-imagined to balance cultural diversity, with a formal equality of status and membership (Favell, 1998).

Implicit in this process is what Favell views as 'an under-theorised, elite re-production of a long-lost idea of national political community; papering over inequality, conflict and power relations with a therapeutical, top-down discourse of multicultural unity' (Favell, 1998). For Favell, such an approach is a 'functionalist, Parsonian idea of social integration' purporting to 'unite all classes, and all groups –

whether majority or minority – around some singular ideas of national political culture' (Favell, 1998). Even proponents of Liberalism 1 such as Chandran Kukathas admit that such dominance may result. Kukathas' rejoinder to this criticism offers modest comfort: dominance is a consequence Liberalism 1 has to accept (Kukathas, 1997: 423). An analogy may be struck here between muggings in most cities and Kukathas' reply. However much muggings may be considered part and parcel of urban life and although it may not be possible to stop their occurrence completely, that does not imply that people will just have to come to terms with their presence. Similarly, although the by-product of dominance from Liberalism 1's indifferent attitude towards difference may be inevitable, that does not mean nothing can be done to reduce its occurrence or that those being dominated should grudgingly accept it as a fact of life.

As for Liberalism 2, driven by the desire to solve disadvantageous situations and to protect difference from domination, this theoretical approach inevitably fixes the identities of those involved. By doing so, difference becomes entrenched and reproduced. For example, in trying to solve the 'Black problem', Liberalism 2 unconsciously ties Black-ness and the relationship Black-ness has with those around it to a way of life and mode of living that is most often negative (Appiah, 1994: 161). Thus, the 'life-scripts' of those individuals in the groups that Liberalism 2 is concerned to protect have often negative stereotypes placed upon them even if these individuals do not cohere to these stereotypes or have moved away from them. By understanding identity as variation, the shifting identificational strategies propelled by changing opportunities and circumstances make any attempt at even rough group identification very difficult. An example of this reification of difference may be seen in the work of Charles Taylor – one of the more prominent advocates of special

minority rights and a multicultural policy of Liberalism 2. For Taylor, our identities are not something we make up ourselves. Without our relationships with our cultural group, we would be 'at sea' and we would not know who we are anymore (Taylor, 1994: 58). Thus, political recognition of cultural groups is justified because membership to these communities is a precondition of human agency and selfhood (Tempelman, 1999: 20). The difficulty with Taylor's view is the underlying assumption that clear boundaries may be drawn between cultures. His account persistently refers to 'our' and 'their' culture where 'they' can defend 'their' beliefs against 'ours' (Taylor, 1994: 63). However, if identity is understood to be strategic where it floats freely within the parameters given and where, at the moment of its articulation, its floating nature is temporarily hardened, cultural groups and beliefs are not always organised into distinct compartments. As a result, any attempt to identify groups not only inadvertently reifies fluid and shifting difference but it also deprives individuals of the space to revise their identity.

Besides the pessimistic outlook to group relations that leads the entrenchment of difference and the negation of the possibility for change, the static understanding of identity held by Liberalism 1 and 2 also has more specific problems. For Liberalism 1 and its focus on the protection of individuals as individuals under the law, the problem that may result is that the system requires a strong state to keep animosity out and civility in place. As noted by Habermas drawing from the Kantian perspective on autonomy, the law and the rights bestowed by a state can only be seen to acquire autonomy for individuals if they can understand themselves as the authors of the law that binds them (Habermas, 1994: 112).

For Habermas,

> it is not a matter of public autonomy supplementing and remaining external to private autonomy [as is the case in Liberalism 1], but rather of an internal, that is, conceptually necessary connection between them (Habermas, 1994: 113).

Put differently, individuals cannot enjoy equal liberties unless they have exercised their autonomy as citizens to arrive at a clear understanding about what interests are justified, what things can be treated equally and what things cannot in a particular case. Liberalism 1 does not take into consideration the need for individuals to participate in the creation and understanding of a system of rights. Similar to the position taken in Hobbes' *Leviathan*, it assumes that rights can be bestowed from above and also fails to be aware of the reality that the system of rights in place has already come from somewhere. These 'empty' rights require strong enforcement and once that is weakened, exploited or removed, the cohesion breaks down.

A dilemma specific to Liberalism 2 resulting from its immutable understanding of identity is the difficultly surrounding the identification of groups. To fashion a population that is easier to observe, measure and administer, Liberalism 2 ignores the variability of identity. It does so in order to reduce the constantly changing social reality beneath a population into something more easily administered yet very removed from the situation at hand. The boundaries of 'us' and 'them' are often unclear and change with the issues in dispute. Furthermore, collectives are usually not culturally homogenous nor are the values shared within them held in common by all of its members. Divisions within a community are more common than not, where criticism is often directed at the vociferous elements that claim to speak for all.[7] Will Kymlicka's work may be seen to represent this

difficulty in identifying groups. As discussed above, Kymlicka is of the opinion that cultural groups have a right to be protected as 'the autonomy of individuals – their ability to make good choices amongst good lives – is intimately tied up with access to their culture, with the prosperity and flourishing of their culture, and with the respect accorded their culture by others' (Kymlicka, 2002: 339). The only caveat Kymlicka places on the protection of different cultures is 'only if, and in so far as, they are governed by liberal principles' (Kymlicka, 1995: 153). For Kymlicka, groups that fit into his category are indigenous peoples or 'national minorities', like Quebecois. For those that do not meet the criteria, in particular recently immigrated groups, the liberal state has no obligation to preserve their cultures. The difference between these two groups for Kymlicka goes deeper than their respect for liberal principles. He argues that immigrants, in contrast to national minorities or indigenous people, have voluntarily left their country and have therefore waived their right to live within their culture (Kymlicka, 1995: 95-8). Therefore, within Kymlicka's work, there not only lies a hierarchy of essentialised cultures where the culture of liberalism is non-debateable, but there also lies a privileging of cultures dependent upon the inside/outside divide of the state. For Kymlicka, liberal culture is not explicitly affected, challenged and revised through the interaction with other cultures but is instead universal and non-negotiable. Furthermore, nonliberal cultures are left with a take-it-or-leave-it option where any co-existence will be 'nothing more then a temporary *modus vivendi*' in which these cultures are still branded ignorant or wrong (Tempelman, 1999: 29).

2.3 Introducing Diasporas

> Diasporas, like pilgrimages, military campaigns and diseases, are indifferent to the idiosyncrasies of nation-states and often flow through their cracks and exploit their vulnerabilities. They are thus a testimony to the inherent fragility of the links between people, polity and territory and to the negotiability of the relationship between people and place (Appadurai and Breckenridge, 1989: i).

In the previous sections, Liberalism 1 and 2 were located in the wider multiculturalism debate and the complications both theories face in accommodating a variable identity was exposed. This section introduces the notion of diaspora in order to allow for a deeper appreciation of the concept before this thesis continues to employ the concept in question to demonstrate the problems Liberalism 1 and 2 may face in the management of difference. As highlighted in the previous chapter, diasporas have had a long and complex history next to more sessile communities and there are now at least thirty ethnic groups that declare themselves as diasporas or are termed as such by others (Cohen, 1996: 507). In spite of their increased presence and lengthy history, diasporas have been relatively overlooked in the multiculturalism discourse (see Chapter 1, Section 1.2, Pg. 7). As the quote above highlights, diasporas have traditionally been considered a 'difficult' minority due to their ability to resist being pigeonholed into the state's identificational boundaries. While it is possible for members of a diaspora to have had a long history of residence within more implanted communities, the connotations of being dispersed from somewhere else makes diasporas stand out from their neighbours. It is this 'neither here nor there' element that most clearly illustrates the variability of identity, thus placing diasporas in a good position to highlight the difficulties

confronting Liberalism 1 and 2. Section 2.3 is divided into two parts. The first part (Section 2.3.1) offers the reasons why diasporas have become more prominent in world politics. In the second part (Section 2.3.2), by surveying IR's understanding of diasporas, I show why there is a need to find a working definition of the term before it can be confidently deployed to highlight Liberalism 1 and 2's deficiencies.

Although there have been some IR theorists who have dedicated some analysis to diasporas (Seton-Watson, 1977; Sheffer, 1986), until very recently, diasporas have been oddly overlooked by IR theorists in general. Instead, those in the field of cultural theory, sociology, anthropology and history have spearheaded research into this collective. The neglect by IR with regard to diasporas is surprising as the latter have been very active within the international arena. For example, works on the Jews (Johnson, 1995; Sachar, 1990) and the Chinese (Wang, 1990; Seagrave, 1997) reveal their central roles in the conduct of international politics and trade. Furthermore, the thoughts and actions of individuals in the African diaspora such as Garvey (1977, 1984) on Pan-Africanism have offered alternatives to state-centred politics that dominate IR and global politics.

Milton Esman usefully identifies two important factors affecting the ability of a diaspora to act as an actor in international relations as well as seven types of activity conducted by diasporas that may be used to illustrate the impact of these groups on the international stage (Esman, 1986). The two factors affecting the political role that may be played by the diaspora are: (1) its own resources and skills and (2) the opportunities offered by the host country (Esman, 1986: 336-339). A diaspora's greater or lesser ability to influence the environment around it is heavily dependent on the economic resources and the occupational skills that it possesses and/or the rapidity with which it is able to acquire them. For example, unlike the

Jews, those of African descent in the United States tended to lack the necessary skills to influence matters beyond their localities (BBC Online, 24/03/98). As such, they took a longer time than the Jews to accumulate the necessary resources to do so. Secondly, the influence they may have is also affected by the opportunities on offer in their host country. This denotes the degree and freedom available to diasporas to mobilise and promote their interests. For example, in Western European countries, groups enjoy relative freedom to organize themselves to promote their collective interest, yet this is not always the case in many Middle Eastern states.

If the necessary skills are present and the opportunities to use them are on offer, Esman highlights seven ways in which a diaspora can become implicated in international politics (Esman, 1986: 340-349). Firstly, diasporas may attempt to directly influence events in their home country. The methods employed may range from economic, political or military. An example of this would be factions of the Irish diaspora in the United States providing assistance to the IRA during the height of the Troubles (Coogan, 1995: 278-279). Secondly, diasporas may use the influence they have on their host government as a tool to act on behalf of the interests of their home government. This could be seen in the Jewish diaspora's ability to influence the United States into giving far-reaching military, economic and diplomatic assistance to Israel. Thirdly, diasporas may seek protection from their home government when threatened with mistreatment by their hosts. Fourth, diasporas may also influence international organizations to act on behalf of their homeland. An example of this is can be found in the actions of the Tibetans who have successfully drawn the attention of the international community to the plight of Tibet under Chinese rule. The successful use of international channels, for example, the European Union (EU) has thus enabled the Tibetans to alert the international

community to the actions of the Chinese government in their homeland. The remaining three means by which a diaspora may be embroiled in international relations include attempts by the home government to employ diasporas for the pursuit of their own goals as diasporas can be important sources of economic and political benefit. Furthermore, the host country may use a resident diaspora in pursuit of its own political and economic goals. For example, Southeast Asian governments work with the Chinese diaspora resident within their borders to facilitate arrangements for investment into China. Finally, home governments may seek the aid of host governments to rein in the activities of its diaspora. This may be seen in the way in which the British government has, over the years, worked with the US government to curtail the support the IRA attains from Irish Americans.

2.3.1 *Reasons for the Proliferation of Diasporas*

The ability of diasporas to play such an active role in global politics has perhaps led to the relatively recent profusion of articles by IR scholars concerned with the threat posed by diasporas to the state (Sheffer, 1994; King and Melvin, 2000). Before these are discussed, it is important to understand the reasons for the recent increase in interest in diasporas. As noted by Richard Davies, there are four general reasons for the rise in prominence of diasporas: (1) the impact of globalisation; (2) increased migratory flows; (3) increased levels of pluralism and tolerance; and (4) increased ethnonationalism (Davies, 2000: 27-31). Although separated neatly into four clear-cut reasons by Davies, it may be argued that the latter three are also the products of the process of globalisation. If globalisation is marked by its velocity, intensity and extentsity (Held *et al.*, 1999), quicker and cheaper movement (velocity) increases

migratory flows. Increased interaction (intensity) through a more integrated world economy as well as the creation of an international labour market produces greater pluralism. Finally, owing to the increased demand for statehood (extentsity), increased ethnonationalism is experienced. Nevertheless, the four reasons discussed here are not especially new. People have always been 'on the move', the level of technology has always facilitated the process and few societies have ever been totally homogeneous. Globalisation at its current stage has merely resulted in the further compression of space-time to a level that is unprecedented though uneven, thus increasing the salience of Davies' four reasons.

For a more detailed examination of the impact of globalisation on diasporas, the work of Robin Cohen provides a useful starting point (Cohen, 1996, 1997). According to Cohen, globalisation has been conducive to the flourishing of diasporas by allowing the movement of people, capital, information and resources to flow with greater ease (Cohen, 1997: 155-176). Globalisation is understood here as a historical process that transforms the spatial organization of social relations and transactions, generating transcontinental or regional networks of interaction and the exercise of power (Held and McGrew, 1998: 220). It is a technology-induced process that has led to the growth of a more integrated world economy, a growth in the number of states, and the development of rapid global communication and transportation possibilities. To put it more succinctly, there are more reasons to move, more reasons to leave and more people can move with speed and ease. The ability to move rapidly allows for greater interaction between a diaspora's various nodes. Moreover, an increasingly comprehensive global air network has opened up more areas on the world map. Nevertheless, whilst states have been able to exercise some control over physical movements and to a lesser extent financial movement,

the technological advancement in communications such as faxes and electronic mail connect far-flung groups inexpensively and instantaneously. Additionally, the global communications network facilitates the transfer of information between 'home' and the many points of a diaspora. This point is particularly relevant as the speed by which images and ideas can be sent all over the globe allows for the 'continuous flexing of the muscles of memory, and the tapping of the hidden veins of nostalgia' (Appadurai and Breckenridge, 1989: iii). Whereas previously over time the migrant would possibly lose touch with home having moved away to a distant land, modern day migrants are persistently bombarded with its image (or at least offered the possibility of being bombarded), thus continually being reminded of and reproducing home.

In a point not wholly unrelated to globalisation, another reason for the rise in prominence of diasporas is the increase in migratory flows. According to the United Nations Population Fund of 1993 and with figures projected to rise in the future, there were 100 million immigrants worldwide in the said year. Notwithstanding it being an age-old occurrence, new technologies and processes have resulted in unprecedented levels of migratory flows (Constas and Platias, 1993). These flows encourage the growth of diasporas as their numbers are persistently replenished allowing for the replacement of those who assimilate or return home. Despite John Armstrong's (1976) assertion that diasporas may be divided into mobilised and proletarian diasporas – where mobilised diasporas enjoy material and cultural resources unavailable to proletarian diasporas – both the educated, affluent and politically mobilised *and* the less advantaged have been on the move. Exposed by the frequent news reports on botched migrant smuggling operations, the smuggling

of migrants from the less fortunate end of the spectrum has become big business (Adams, *Times*, 25/05/01; Horsnell, *Times*, 01/03/00).

Furthermore, most diasporas contain both mobilised and proletarian elements. Diasporas are composed of both the upwardly mobile and the socio-economically disadvantaged. For example, the Chinese, African and Jewish diasporas have all had elites, a middle class and an underclass. An underlying cause of migration has been the continuing inequality in the global political economy and the persistence of conflict and disorder. Improvements in transportation networks only serve to make escape a more viable option. In a progressively more globalised world economy, states have actively sought to attract well-educated and skilled migrants. For example, immigrants made up 32 per cent of Silicon Valley's scientific and engineering workforce in 1990, and according to a report by Anna Lee Saxenian, a professor at the University of California, that number will have increased thanks to a loosening of particular immigration restrictions (Islam, *Observer*, 11/06/2000). Coupled with this greater ease of movement, the inability of the state to fully maintain the integrity of its borders has allowed the less educated and skilled to flit through.[8]

The increase in global migratory flows and the subsequent rise of diasporas have also been propelled by global trends towards the concepts of cultural and political pluralism that are underpinned by liberal democracies (Davies, 2000: 29, Sheffer, 1994: 65). Post-World War Two, the presence of the immigrant within Western liberal democracies became prominent due to three factors: first, the growth of immigrant populations due to the twin processes of decolonisation and the need of receiving countries for cheap labour; second, the desire of certain migrant groups to defend their right to cultural difference; and finally, the development of the view in

receiving states that assimilation policies were illiberal – spurred by the spirit of liberal inclusion, the view that society should be more of a 'tossed salad' rather than a melting pot became the mainstay (Davies, 2000: 29).[9] Spearheading the development of multicultural or multiethnic societies is the creation of 'global cities' or 'world cities' (Sassen-Koob, 1990, Henderson and Castells, 1987). These global cities act as communication, transportation and financial hubs that have perhaps more in common with each other than with their hinterland (Cohen, 1997: 165-169, Clark, 1996: 137-164). As transactions and interactions between cities intensify, they lose some of their national characteristics and their significance resides more in their international rather than their national roles. Global cities serve as high order service centres with the occupational profile of global cities comprising services such as corporate management, banking, legal services, telecommunications, international transportation, computing, research and higher education. This occupational profile results in a distinctive social composition comprising of those who are highly educated and mobile. Global cities are places of social polarisation that may be conceptualised as 'dual cities' (Castells, 1998). The social composition of these cities may be divided into two groups. First, those sustaining its global city functions that are well-educated, highly paid and mobile elites and, secondly, the low skilled and low paid working class servicing those elites (Clark, 1996: 139). According to Cohen, these conditions are particularly conducive to the survival and flowering of diasporas (Cohen, 1997: 168). Both diasporic elites and underclass are suited to the new notions of space generated by the connection of the global cities coupled with the growing pluralism and tolerance in these cities – both find their niches in these cities through their international diasporic connections and are better

able to take advantage of conditions that favours people who are more mobile and less rooted to national spaces.

The final factor that has generated the recent interest and relevance of diasporas has been the rise of ethnonationalism, and, although Davies does not mention this, ethnic conflict in general (Davies, 2000: 30). A glance at the press headlines reveals this all too clearly: India is forced to deal with a violent secessionist movement in the Punjab, violence continues in Northern Ireland, and Kurds are fighting for a homeland. The participation of diasporas in these secessionist, irredentist or national liberation movements is by no means new. For example, the Jewish diaspora managed to create a state for themselves (Edelheit and Edelheit, 2000), the Chinese diaspora participated enthusiastically during the rise of Chinese nationalism (Duara, 1997) and African Americans played a major role in the creation of Liberia (West, 1970). Although terrorist activities supported by diasporas are what currently captures the headlines today, diasporas are not limited to those roles in these secessionist, irredentist or national liberation movements. For example, the Chinese lobby in the United States plays an important role in pressuring the US government to nudge China towards a more open liberal market economy and liberal-democratic practise (Harding, 1992: 210-211). Furthermore, various Jewish lobbies influence US foreign policy towards the Middle East (Watkins, 1997; Neimah, 1992) and African Americans were instrumental in bringing apartheid to an end in South Africa (Culverson, 1996; Dickson, 1996). The ability of diasporas to rally support and their ability in putting into service their networks to transmit resources and information in furthering their causes has been one of the major reasons for the awakening of IR's interest in them. Scholars such as Benedict Anderson (1994) and Gabriel Sheffer (1994) analyse the threat posed by

diasporas to homelands and hosts whilst others such as Yossi Shain (1994, 1998) are more concerned with the potential of diasporas to aid the foreign policies of their perceived homelands.

2.3.2 *Understandings of Diaspora within IR*

As diasporas become more and more prominent, as their numbers continue to be replenished and as their awakening becomes more of a possibility, more and more academic books are being published on the subject. If a keyword search is conducted in the British Library catalogue for the past five years on 'diaspora', it reveals a plethora of social groups:

- Jurca, C. (2001). *White Diaspora: the Suburb and the Twentieth Century American Novel*, Princeton, New Jersey; Oxford: Princeton University Press.
- Jenkins, E. (2000). *The Muslim Diaspora: a Comprehensive Reference to the Spread of Islam in Asia, Africa and the Americas*, Jefferson, North Carolina; London" McFarland.
- Kaminsky, AK. (1999). *After Exile: Writing the Latin American Diaspora*, Minneapolis, Minnesota; London: University of Minnesota Press.
- King, C and Marvin, NJ. (eds) (1998). *Nations Abroad: Diaspora Politics and International Relations in the Former Soviet Union*, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press.
- Verdicchio, P. (1997). *Bound By Distance: Rethinking Nationalism Through the Italian Diaspora*, Madison, New Jersey: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press.

If the same keyword search is carried out on some of the journals that deal with IR, another trend becomes apparent.

- Cohen, R. (1996). 'Diasporas and the nation-state: from victims to challengers', *International Affairs*, Vol. 72, No. 3, Pg. 507-520.
- Davies, DR and More, WH. (1997). 'Ethnicity matters: transnational ethnic alliances and foreign policy behaviour', *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 41, No. 1, Pg. 171-184.
- Shain, Y. (1995). 'Ethnic diasporas and U.S. foreign policy', *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 109, No. 5, Pg. 811-842.
- Sheffer, G. (1994). 'Ethno-national diasporas and security', *Survival*, Vol. 36, No. 1, Pg. 60-79.
- King, C and Melvin, NJ. (2000). 'Diaspora politics: ethnic linkages, foreign policy and security in Eurasia, *International Security*, Vol. 24, No. 3, Pg. 133-144.
- Languerre, MS. (1999). 'State, diaspora and transnational politics: Haiti reconceptualized', *Millennium* , Vol. 28, No 3, Pg. 663-651.

These books and articles reveal two apparent trends in the various analyses. These trends are important for this thesis as they indicate what needs to be considered in the next chapter where I will proceed to survey diaspora theorising to attain an operable characterisation of the term for the purpose of this research. Firstly, there seems to be a lack of consensus in the literature on the entity they are dealing with. Instead, the term diaspora is used to encapsulate groups as diverse as the Muslims, Russians. Haitians and the Italians. Moreover, in most of the literature, little attempt is made to specify the theoretical limits and conditions of the term's applicability. This has led one observer to wonder if analyses on diasporas are 'losing the plot' – allowing it to be used at a level where it may 'mean almost all things to all people' on the one hand, and on the other hand, is allowed to be used very selectively for some groups and not others (Cohen P., 1999: 7). Thus, usage of the term has reached a stage where there may be a need to re-evaluate the term's applicability as well as its connotations. Recognising this lack of definitional clarity, the next chapter

reviews current theorising on diasporas in order to make clear the way it is understood when their experience is used to review Liberalism 1 and 2 in the following episodes.

In addition to the lack of definitional consensus, the second trend in IR's analysis of diasporas is to consider them as a possible asset to a state's foreign policy or a potential threat to its security. A major advocate of the view that diasporas are a foreign policy asset to the state is Yossi Shain (Shain, 1994, 1995). Shain's definition of diaspora is very loose and is partial to Khachig Tölöyan's often quoted view that the semantic domain of diaspora should be expanded to include words such as 'immigrant, expatriate, refugee, guest-workers, exile community, overseas, community, ethnic community' (Tölöyan, 1991: 5). Shain offers what he refers to as a 'political definition' of diaspora, holding that they comprise a people 'with a common origin who reside outside a claimed or an independent home territory' and who 'regard themselves or are regarded by others as members or potential members of their country of origin' (Shain, 1995: 814). With such a broad definition, Shain's analysis includes groups such as the Slovaks, Czechs, Armenians, Croats, Cubans, Filipinos, Chinese, Koreans, Mexicans and Africans. His argument is easy to follow – the US has shifted from a policy of assimilation to one that celebrates diversity thus empowering what he considers diasporas to organise and have a meaningful voice in US foreign policy without the fear of being charged with dual-loyalty. The catch diasporas find themselves wrapped up in under these conditions is that they 'must justify their actions in terms of American national interests and values, answer to their US ethnic compatriots, and prove their loyalty to their home country' (Shain, 1995: 813). Shain's argument is interesting here as he

deploys the term diaspora whilst other terms are on offer and without any greater analytical force offered to the argument despite its use.

Standing apart from Shain's position, there is an alternative view in IR according to which diasporas should be viewed as a possible threat to state security. For individuals such as Gabriel Sheffer, diasporas are 'social and political entities that arise from migration (which may be voluntary or imposed and is usually from an ethno-national state or homeland) to one or more host countries' (Sheffer, 1994: 61). Similar to Shain's work, the definition of diaspora here is expansive and possibly verging on the meaningless. From his definition, diverse groups such as the Jews, Cubans and Basques are all considered diasporas. He stretches the term to an unmanageable degree with the question of its utility to the argument still left unanswered. Moreover, Sheffer is of the view that diasporas are here to stay despite the predictions of the Marxists, liberals and assimilationists (Sheffer, 1994: 77). Those that have a secessionist or separatist bent will continue to pursue their cause as long as the ethos of the nation-state remains, while diasporas that pursue less radical strategies and tactics will always face possible charges of dual loyalty. Faced with the troika of porous borders, the inability to fully expel 'foreign' groups and the failure of assimilationist policies, Sheffer's solution is simple – greater and continuous attempts at accommodation by host governments. His argument is contestable due to the reification of identity that underlies his article. Groups that he terms diasporas will always remain such as assimilation is written off from the offset. A Kurd, Sikh or Palestinian will undoubtedly remain as such – the unassimilatable 'Other' who has breeched the state's walls and is destined to be a potential threat by playing off host and home in perpetuity.

Surveying IR's approach to understand diasporas reveals three important considerations any analysis using the term has to contend with. Firstly, there is a need to be very clear on the parameters of the term. If diasporas are nothing more than ethnic minorities, their deployment in any analysis offers little utility. Secondly, if, as argued thus far, identity is variable, any understanding of diasporas will have to display a certain sensitivity to the fluidity of its borders. Members of a diaspora today need not be members tomorrow. Finally, any analysis employing diasporas will have to contend with their 'neither here nor there' element. Therefore, any analysis would have to possess an understanding of the manner in which host and home come into play in developing a diaspora.

2.4 Concluding Remarks

Tracing Kymlicka's four-stage or themed division of the multiculturalism debate, it was shown that the multiculturalism debate has generally surrounded the practise of special group rights that may transform into unequal rights based on cultural lines within polities. However, by focussing on the understanding of identity that underpins theories on multiculturalism, a multiculturalism continuum was constructed here that divided up multiculturalism discourse into three parts: assimilation, integration (mild and hard) and separation. Following from this, through a discussion on the various ways identity may be understood, it was argued that both Liberalism 1 and 2 are dependent upon a static notion of identity to support their position. However, having established that identity is more often than not variable and fluid (or to use Stuart Hall's expression: strategic), it was put forward here that Liberalism 1 and 2 may fail to achieve harmony within a polity and may

instead reify difference and foster distrust between groups. As this thesis seeks to use the experience of the Chinese, African and Jewish diaspora to illustrate the difficulties faced by Liberalism 1 and 2 when identity is considered variable, the remainder of Chapter Two has introduced the concept of diasporas. Additionally, by discussing IR's understanding of the term, it was argued that if the concept is to be employed successfully in this thesis, there is a need to establish a clear understanding of the manner in which the term is understood in the thesis. Furthermore, this understanding has to acknowledge the variable nature of identity as well as the manner in which host and home affect the creation of diasporas. Consequently, the next chapter of this thesis focuses on attaining a clear understanding of diasporas.

Endnotes for Chapter Two:

[1] The debate between proponents of liberalism and communitarianism surrounded the importance of individual rights versus group rights. For a good summary of the points of contention between liberals and communitarians, see Stephen Mulhall and Adam Swift, (1994), *Liberals and Communitarians*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

[2] Admittedly, the word *neutral* here may be misleading as no society is strictly neutral. All political institutions have a historical character that prevents them from being strictly neutral. For example, political institutions shaped by European traditions tend to produce governments and laws that are more likely to conducted and written in a European language, their parliaments will betray some European influences in procedure and they may practise certain holidays (Kukathas, 1998: 697).

[3] This concept of culture is tied up with the larger debate on identity and both terms will be used interchangeably here.. The use of identity in place of culture here is similar to Parekh's understanding of diversity. Parekh in discussing multiculturalism identifies three forms of cultural diversity (Parekh, 2000: 2-4) – or alternatively, three forms of cultural *identity*. The first form, subcultural diversity, refers to groups that although sharing in the broader culture, entertain different ways of conducting their life in particular areas and largely seek to pluralize but not replace the existing culture. The people that inhabit this form of diversity include gays, lesbians, followers of unconventional family arrangements and artists. The second form, perspectival diversity, is deeply sceptical of the core principles of the prevailing culture and seeks to reconstitute it along suitable lines by intellectual dissonance, and members of this group include feminists. The final form, communal diversity, involves organised communities that live within different systems of beliefs and practises comprising newly arrived immigrants and established communities with a religious tint such as the Jews. All three share common features, but differ on their particular relationship with the dominant culture. Subcultural diversity provides a limited challenge that is expressed through terms derived from the dominant culture such as freedom, while perspectival diversity represents a radically different vision of life that the dominant culture either rejects or recognises tacitly but not practically, for example the feminist recognition of sexism and patriarchy. Communal diversity however springs from a plurality of established communities, each with a particular history and way of life it wishes to preserve. Applying 'multiculturalism' to the first two is disingenuous because many societies within history have had elements of these forms of diversity. On the other hand the third, communal diversity or communal identity, is a unique feature that warrants an innovative approach to its study and development.

[4] The idea of history here is not presented as absolute fact. It should be read more along the lines of historical memory based on what individuals can remember and believes has happened in his past. This position is not unique. David Hume (1978) argued that

> As memory alone acquaints us with the continuance and extent of this succession of perceptions [i.e. our past], 'tis to be consider'd upon that account chiefly, as the source of personal identity....Memory does not so much *produce* as *discover* personal identity, by schewing us the relation of cause and effect among our different perceptions (Hume, 1978: 261-261, emphasis in original)

[5] It must be stressed that this position does not hold that, on the one hand, diasporic identity is fluid, while, on the other hand, the identities of more settled groups are static. The argument here is that diasporic identities are permitted to be more variable than the fluid identities of groups who consider themselves more settled as being 'of somewhere else' offers more identificational avenues.

[6] For point (3) and (6), there are subtle differences between parasitism and predation as well as protocooperation and mutualism. For a more in depth discussion on their differences, please see Kelly, MG. and McGrath, JC., (1975), *Biology: Evolution and Adaptation to the Environment*, Boston, Mass and London: Houghton Mifflin Company, Pg. 389-393.

[7] This point may be illustrated during the Rushdie affair. During the affair, Muslims did not have a common position on their response to the publication of *The Satanic Verses*. Besides those that agreed with the Khomeini death sentence, some condemned the book but did not agree with the death sentence (for example, see MM Ashan and AR Kidwai (eds.), (1993), *Sacrilege versus Civility: Muslim Perspectives on the Satanic Verses*, Leicester: The Islamic Foundation) while others came out in support of Rushdie (for example, see *For Rushdie: Essays by Arab and Muslim Writers in Defense of Free Speech*, New York: George Braziller, 1994).

[8] 'Slippage' should not be viewed in an overly negative light. For example, it is viewed in the US as profitable overall for the receiving country as immigrants tend to of the age where they give more to the state than they take out of it's coffers (Palast, *Observer*, 03/06/2001, Simon, 1995).

[9] The metaphor of the melting pot with its connotations of blending together coupled with the corresponding loss of the distinctiveness of its individual ingredients has given way to that of the 'tossed salad' where, although mixed, the ingredients remain distinct. To further the metaphoric imagery, the idea of the 'stir-fry' has been touted as its ingredients – though remaining distinct – still subtly affect each other.

Chapter Three: Theorising Diaspora

This thesis examines the potential of Liberalism 1 and 2 – as distinguished by Michael Walzer – as theories of multiculturalism for the management of difference. More precisely, I argue that the static notion of identity that forms the basis of both theories rather than leading to harmony between groups of a polity may instead result in greater discord. To accomplish this objective, the experiences of diasporas in the light of the theoretical assumptions of both Liberalism 1 and 2 are employed to bring to the fore their insufficiencies in offering a comprehensive long-term approach to managing difference. In the previous chapter I have placed Liberalism 1 and 2 in the wider context of the debate on multiculturalism while also highlighting how a variable understanding of identity may cause difficulties for their objective of creating a harmonious multicultural polity. Moreover, the concept of diasporas was introduced in Chapter Two (Section 2.3) by outlining the reasons for which diasporas have become conspicuous in global politics while engaging with the understanding of diasporas as found in the IR literature. The following four general reasons for diasporas' recently heightened prominence in global politics have been identified: (1) the impact of globalisation; (2) increased migratory flows; (3) increased levels of pluralism and tolerance in most states; and (4) their role in

ethnonationalism. A corollary of this increased prominence has been a greater degree of analytical engagement of IR scholars with the subject of diaspora. In general, theorising on diasporas within IR has been marked by a lack of consensus on how the concept of diasporas should be defined coupled with a focus on the potential of diasporas to act as either an asset or a threat to the state. Through this discussion, it was argued in Section 2.3 that to be deployed successfully in this thesis, a clear understanding of the term has to be laid out.

For this purpose, Chapter Three looks at contemporary understandings of diasporas, calling attention to their general adequacies and inadequacies in order to construct a characterisation of this transnational collective. While doing so, emphasis is placed on two specific points: firstly, the underlying understanding of identity found within these contemporary understandings; and secondly, the treatment of the triangular relationship between diaspora, host and home. Irrespective of the definition of diaspora on offer, the term forces one to deal with these two issues above, as, I argue, to be part of a diaspora involves being 'in-between places' along with the identificational issues that arise from such a position. It is these two characteristics of the concept of diaspora – with the related concerns of difference and belonging – that are of greatest interest to this thesis due to its concern for multiculturalism. As opposed to championing a definition of diaspora over others, the objective of this chapter is thus to offer an additional characterisation to the constellation of understandings that make up the essentially contested concept of diaspora.[1] The characterisation forwarded here is one responsive to the variable nature of identity as discussed in the previous chapter; thus it characterises membership to a diaspora as both transient and 'real'.

The remainder on this chapter is divided into three sections. In the first section, the borders of diaspora are discussed (Section 3.1). Therefore, the focus here is a discussion on which expressions of identity are challenged by the concept of diaspora in order to demarcate the latter's conceptual parameters. Following from this, three different approaches to understanding the concept of diasporas are examined and their advantages (and disadvantages) discussed (Section 3.2). In the final section of this chapter I forward an alternative characterisation of the concept of diaspora (Section 3.3). This alternative will be evaluated for its potential to sustain an account of diaspora that addresses the problematic issues of accounting for an entity that is, on the one hand, generated from certain social conditions, and, on the other hand, in possession of phenotypic characteristics.

3.1 Analysing the Borders of Diaspora

In a recent article tracing the use of the term *diaspora*, the first line reads 'where once there was dispersions, there now is diaspora' (Tölöyan, 1996: 3). The recent diffusion of the term – derived from the Greek word *speiro* (scatter or sow) and the preposition *dia* (over) – is now being used to capture a varied group of populations. Engaging with its earliest use, Robin Cohen argues, although there was some displacement of the Greeks to Asia Minor due to poverty, overpopulation and interstate war, the term had an essentially positive meaning (Cohen, 1997: 2). It was used in reference to the Greek colonisation of Asia Minor and the Mediterranean during the period between 800 and 600 BC – a diaspora that was a result of conquest, settlement and trade. Only subsequent use of the term took on the negative connotations of displacement, exile, oppression and victimhood. This connotational

turn was the result of it being used in the Greek translation of the Bible to refer to the first Jewish experience of exile after the destruction of Jerusalem in 586BC by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylonia and their second exile to Rome after the destruction of their second Temple.

In recent times, the use of the term has seen a striking inflation (Cohen, 1996: 507). As discussed in the previous chapter, this upsurge in groups identified as diasporas may be explained by the vast numbers of people allowed to move around the world due to technological advancements in travel. However, another possible reason may be the strategic possibilities offered by the term for the realisation of specific objectives. As such, diasporic identification may be raised or ignored in order to serve a particular purpose. For example, German researchers use the term in reference to the *Volksdeutsche* in Russia yet fail to extend its usage in reference to the Turks in Germany (Cohen P, 1999: 6). With the increase in the application of the term, the parameters of its definition have become stretched and confused. As discussed in Chapter Two, an examination of the current literature on the subject reveals a multitude of definitions with few common features – particular kinds of studies on diasporas tend to imply different specific definitions. For example, sociological studies often stress the intensity of the dispersal and focus on questions of identity and social integration (Hall 1990, Cohen P 1999). Political studies tend to stress the continuing connection with the 'motherland' and the political effects of this (Esman 1986, 1995, R. Davies 1996, Shain and Sherman 1998). Historical, literary and cultural works in their definitions of the term promote it as a strategic metaphor and stress the generic or genealogical possibilities of its usage (Brah 1996, Cohen 1996, 1997, Gilroy, 1993a, 1993b).

However defined, diasporas are unquestioningly the by-product of large-scale widespread migration. If they are to be defined in the most general sense as a 'segment of people living outside the homeland' (Conner, 1986: 16), current global migration levels point towards their flourishing. According to the United Nations International Migration Report 2002 (Document ESA/P/WP.178)[2], about 175 million people around the world currently reside outside their country of birth. Furthermore, the number of migrants has doubled since 1975, with 60 percent of the world's migrants residing in the more developed regions. Almost one of every ten people living in the more developed regions is currently a migrant. The number of refugees, though smaller, is no less significant, standing at 16 million at the end of 2000 (Document ESA/P/WP.178). Due to the substantially large population movements and the growing concerns over the economic, social, political and demographic impact potentially resulting from it, government policies on immigration are changing. At present, about 40 percent of the countries of the world have policies aimed at lowering immigration levels through more restrictive policies. As migration and its offshoot of diasporas are set to grow (or at least continue at its current pace), the need to find an understanding of the entity of *diaspora* is highlighted.

As there are many different and competing understandings of diaspora and as the term is applied to more and more communities, it may be useful here to identify the conceptual parameters of diaspora so as to distinguish it from competing concepts. A useful starting point here are the following four expressions of identity that are challenged by diaspora: (1) the conventional nationalist narrative; (2) autochthonous claims of tribe; (3) conventional understandings of migration; and, (4) radical cosmopolitanism. It is important to stress that the border between these

issues and diaspora are not absolute and their relationship with diasporas is more of a knotted tension – diasporas at one point or another in their history have had elements of the issues they challenge. Nonetheless, the following sections provide a more detailed look at each of these four expressions of identity and their relationship to the concept of diaspora.

3.1.1 *The Conventional Nationalist Narrative*

The conventional nationalist narrative whether it is understood in terms of common origins or in terms of gathered populations stands in opposition to diasporas as both understandings of the nationalist narrative are uncomfortable with a group within their ranks that maintains practical connections and allegiances to a homeland or a dispersed community elsewhere. For the former, as in the case of *jus sanguinis* underlying German citizenship law, the nationalist narrative or, put differently, the story that binds all Germans, is based on ties of descent. Diasporas disrupt this narrative as their presence raises uncomfortable questions such as 'What length of time is sufficient for origins to become common?' and 'How many times removed can a person be for the ties of descent to be no longer valid?'. For the latter, as is the case in France, Canada or Singapore, the nationalist narrative is based on *jus legalis* where members are deemed as such based on legal recognition. Although legal recognition is more inclusive than *jus sanguinis* as it is more receptive to new members, the narrative is disrupted as it demands total allegiance and the severance of old ties.

The world previously conceived of in the literature on nations and nationalism is no longer that portrayed in atlases where the world map is divided

into differently coloured segments each representing a spatially distinct community. Diasporas call into question, for example, Ernest Gellner's understanding of communities as one where discrete ethnological units are tied to the ground. The presence of diasporas muddies the situation where, like Gellner, one could

> [c]onsider the history of the national principle; or consider two ethnographic maps, one drawn up before the age of nationalism, and the other after the principle of nationalism has done much of its work. The first map resembles a painting by Kokoschka. The riot of diverse points of colour is such that no clear pattern can be discerned in any detail.... Look now instead at the ethnographic and political map of an area of the modern world. It resembles not Kokoschka, but say, Modigliani. There is very little shading; neat flat surfaces are clearly separated from each other, it is generally plain where one begins and another ends, and there is little if any ambiguity or overlap (Gellner, 1983: 139-140).

Diasporas with their 'neither here nor there' existence call into question Gellner's orderly map or at least make its borders less tidy. As such, diasporas dispute the conventionalist nationalist narrative that seeks to present the state as a place of homogeneity and integration where differences have been destroyed or assimilated whilst maintaining the difference between itself and those communities which lie beyond its frontiers (Tölöyan, 1991: 6). Diasporas, of course, always have had irredentist, separatist and nationalist groups within their ranks. If one was to review the history of the Jews, Chinese and African diaspora (as will be done in the following chapters 4, 5 and 6), their histories are stocked with examples of moments when members of their diaspora actively sought to create, restore or support their homelands. The point here is that diasporas can never be exclusively nationalist as their precarious position between host and home leads to different degrees of

expression of their identity – for example, some assimilate, some disassociate, some seek a balance between their two worlds whilst others defy.

3.1.2 *Autochthonous Claims of Tribe*

In a related point, the second expression of identity diasporas challenge are tribal claims that stress a tie to a land as diasporas inhabit a different territory to their homeland. Challenging Gellner's picture and giving credence to Robert Walker's position that '[o]nce upon a time, the world was not as it is.... [and the] patterns of inclusion and exclusion we now take for granted are historical innovations', diasporas suggest a return to a world before 'place-bound' theorisations of identity became dominant by being the norm against which identities that are based on geographical and territorial certainties seem increasingly flimsy (Walker, 1995: 179).

The use of 'place-bound' theorisations here refers to the traditional understandings of the relationship between identity and territory found in the branches of the social sciences such as Anthropology, Political Science and International Relations. Such theorisations have an understanding of identity that ties it to specific places due to their unproblematised use of sedentarist notions entrenched within language that also affects their research methodology. Sedentarism is a neologism coined in the English translation of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Gauttari's work on human movement. The term acts as a signifier for the manner in which language confines our thinking of identity to spaces due to an overemphasis on roots. History written from a sedentarist viewpoint allows for a particular conception of world order with everybody belonging to a place and the

world segmented accordingly (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: 23). As such, identity becomes sessile – fixed to one position and immobile.[3] Diasporas query these sedentarist notions by acting as a reminder of a period when everybody at some time or another has been 'on the move' thus questioning the appropriate length of time a community has to exist in a specific area before it may be claimed as home.

3.1.3 *Conventional Understandings of Migration*

The third expression of identity challenged by diasporas is the one found in conventional understandings of migration. Conventional understandings of migration and related processes such as assimilation, acculturation and settlement stand in opposition to diasporas as they conceive of migration as a monodirectional process composed of a break with the old and an embrace of the new (McKeown, 1999: 312). The story of migration under this light is as follows. A migrant abandons both home and previous identity to adopt a new home and identity in their place. If the story is further developed, a migrant may return to his home thus dropping out of one history and re-entering the history of the place he had originally left.

Though the product of migration, diasporas stand in opposition to this conventional understanding of migration as it accentuates how the story of migration never truly ends. Members of a diaspora through their constant balancing act between where they are from and where they are now continually negotiate and renegotiate their relationship with host and home. There are multiple permutations in which this constant juggling act may find expression amongst members of a diaspora as well as within the lifetime of an individual. For example, those who

assimilate may regain their diasporic consciousness whereas others may do the opposite by losing their diasporic consciousness through assimilation. Alternatively, others may spend all their lives juggling both identities of host and home as a response to the various challenges thrown up by life. At times they may identify more with host than home and *vice versa*.

3.1.4 *Radical Cosmopolitanism*

The final form of identity that is contested by diasporas – though ironically they are often cited as exemplars – is what may be dubbed 'radical' cosmopolitanism. By labelling migrants and transnationals 'cosmopolitans' as opposed to the parochials that stayed behind, such an understanding of cosmopolitanism champions mobility and scorns nationality (Van Hear, 1998: 253). Writing on 'globally dispersed ethnic groups', Joel Kotkin proclaims that '[t]hese global tribes are today's quintessential cosmopolitans, in sharp contrast to narrow provincials' (Kotkin, 1992: 3). Despite differences in areas such as ethnicity and nationality, these cosmopolitans have more in common with each other than their fellow co-nationals or co-ethnics. For such cosmopolitans, nationality has no meaning beyond convenience and those who remain bound to a particular state due to some emotional hang-up are outdated at best and at worst, deluded.

Although some members of a diaspora may well conform to such an understanding of cosmopolitanism, many members to a large degree would nonetheless stand in opposition to it despite their general mobility and transnational links. Arguably, nationalism is just as important to diasporas and examples of this are common. If one was to consider the views of Sun Yat Sen – leader of modern

day Chinese nationalism and himself a diasporic Chinese – this view of mobility leading to cosmopolitanism may stand on shaky ground. For Sun:

> [Western Colonial Powers] are now advocating cosmopolitanism to inflame us, declaring that.... as mankind's vision enlarges, nationalism becomes too narrow.... that we should espouse cosmopolitanism.... But it is not a doctrine that wronged races should talk about. We.... must first recover our position of national freedom and equality before we are fit to discuss cosmopolitanism.... We must understand that cosmopolitanism grows out of nationalism; if we want to extend cosmopolitanism we must first establish strongly our own nationalism. If nationalism cannot become strong, cosmopolitanism cannot prosper' (cited in Cheah, 1998: 30).

It is suggested here that diasporas expose the exclusiveness of this cosmopolitan dream. Due to the material differences both between and within diasporas, diasporas call into question the accessibility of this radical cosmopolitanism to the masses. It forces one to ask questions such as 'Who has the power to become a cosmopolitan of this kind?' and 'What kind of cosmopolitanism is this?'. For example, it is conceivable that the cosmopolitanism of an African-American Harvard lecturer is vastly different from the cosmopolitanism of a Ghanaian minicab driver in London.

3.2 Contemporary Theorising on Diasporas

Having identified the expressions of identity that lie at the borders of diaspora, this section explores contemporary understandings of diasporas in order to attain a clear characterisation of the term for the purpose of this thesis. Since theorising on diasporas has been a multidisciplinary enterprise and as those writers in the field of cultural theory, sociology, anthropology and history have had a longer engagement

with the topic, their work is explored here to give the discussion greater width and depth. Despite approaching the subject from a multitude of disciplinary angles, attempts to understand diasporas may be divided into three distinct strands each pursuing a different concern. It is important to establish from the outset that the theorists placed within any of these three schools should not be viewed as proponents of a single unified position. Some have elaborated substantially on their positions whilst others have used the term in an untheorised or undertheorised manner. Their grouping within one of the schools is purely based on the desire to illustrate the site of their opposition to each other.

The first approach to understanding diasporas recognises the need to attain some form of consensus on what form of community may be adequately subsumed by the term. This approach has as its focus the desire to identify a set of characteristics that are part and parcel of diasporas, that is, the search for specific qualifications that would distinguish it from other patterns of migration. In a related mode of analysis, the second approach to studying diasporas has been an attempt to attain a typology of diasporas. Such approaches seek to bring greater structure to discussions on diaspora by distinguishing the varying causes for their dispersal. As such, the term becomes a broad church in which many different types of diaspora – for example, trade, victim and cultural – sit together. The final approach to the term discusses the diasporic experience as a social condition and societal process. Revolving around diaspora identity formation stemming from the triangular relationship between diaspora, host and home, these approaches understand diaspora as a sociological condition rather than one representing a description of a particular group.

In this section of the chapter I expound the positions of the above three schools of diaspora theorising and discusses their adequacies and inadequacies in dealing with the topic. Arguing that the fundamental problem surrounding contemporary approaches to diaspora is that they have talked past each other, this chapter forwards a synthesis between these three approaches in order to arrive at an alternative characterisation of diaspora. The dynamics of diasporic identity formation influences the identifiable characteristics and *vice versa*. Acknowledging diasporas as the products of particular social conditions, I argue that diasporas possess adequate identifiable phenotypic characteristics to set them aside from other forms of communities.

3.2.1 *Diasporas of the Checklist: Seeking an 'Ideal' Diaspora*

Given the number of groups the term diaspora has been applied to, attempts inevitable have had to be made to attain some agreement on the concept in question. In a nutshell, the driving force behind this first approach to diasporas is an attempt to find concord on what social collectives the term may be applied to. Beyond the term itself, in journals such as *Public Culture* and *Diaspora*, numerous other terms such as *creolization*, *hybridity*, *border zones*, *travelling cultures* and *nomadism* compete with each other and *diaspora* to describe the contact zones between nations, cultures, ethnicities and regions (Clifford, 1997: 245). A diverse number of scholars fall into this first school of diaspora theorising that seeking to enforce a stricter policing to the manner in which the term is used. Some are more accommodating whilst others are more sophisticated. For the purpose of this analysis, two definitions

of diaspora are discussed in order to highlight the difficulties surrounding such approaches.

One of the more general ways of understanding diaspora through the imposition of a specific criterion is, as cited above, Walker Conner's definition of diaspora as being simply 'that segment of people living outside the homeland' (Conner, 1986: 16). Understanding diasporas in such a general manner has the advantage of not being mired in detail. If Conner's approach is adopted, its inclusiveness allows analysts to study more specific diasporic communities without being drawn into a quagmire of constant qualification and re-qualification. Furthermore, the site of discussion is firmly established – there is diaspora (not in their homeland) on the one side and native (in their homeland) on the other side. The inadequacy of Conner's approach lies in its overextended inclusiveness. With terms such as migrant, immigrant, border community and exile, the term loses utility in its application. Furthermore, Conner's definition fails to define what such a community or its individual members need to think, feel, experience, or do in order to be considered part of a community that dwells outside its homeland (Tölöyan, 1996: 15). To be part of a community goes beyond just being or existing as it involves some form of *doing*. As has been discussed in Chapter Two (Section 2.2.1), to hold a particular type of collective identity necessarily requires something or someone to differentiate oneself from as well as others who conform to the identificational requirements. Therefore, to be part of a collective, an individual needs to feel, think and act in a particular manner that corresponds in the most general sense to others of the group and that sets them apart from others outside the group. In terms of defining diasporas, if a definition does not include some form of *doing*, it may be impossible to identify a member of a diaspora from another who has assimilated.

Similar to the manner in which being a citizen involves having to pay taxes and to obey the laws of the state or being part of a religion requires the obeying of its laws and believing in its teachings, some form of *doing* is necessary for members of the diaspora to be deemed as such.

Besides general definitions such as Conner's, more rigorous definitional checklists have been forwarded. A more sophisticated alternative (and certainly the one cited most often) is William Safran's six defining characteristics of a diaspora (Safran, 1991).[4] Attempting to avoid the inadequacies of Conner's definition, Safran uses the history of the Jews to shape his key characteristics of diaspora. He extends this understanding of diaspora to all *expatriate minority communities* whose members share the following characteristics:

(1) they, or their ancestors, have been dispersed from an original "center" to two or more "peripheral", or foreign, regions;

(2) they retain a collective memory, a vision, or myth about their original homeland – its physical location, history, and achievements;

(3) they believe that they are not – and perhaps cannot be – fully accepted by their host society and therefore feel partly alienated and insulated from it;

(4) they regard their ancestral homeland as their true, ideal home and as the place to which they or their descendents would (or should) return – when conditions are appropriate;

(5) they believe that they should, collectively, be committed to the maintenance or restoration of their original homeland and to its safety and prosperity; and

(6) they continue to relate, personally or vicariously, to that homeland in one way or another, and their ethnocommunal consciousness and solidarity are

> importantly defined by the existence of such a relationship (Safran, 1991: 83-84).

Using his checklist, Safran maintains that although no group conforms to the 'ideal type' that is the Jewish diaspora, it is possible to speak of the Armenian, Maghrebi, Turkish, Palestinian, Cuban, Greek and Chinese diasporas of the present and a Polish diaspora of the past (Safran, 1991: 84).

The advantages of Safran's checklist of characteristics over Conner's more generalised understanding of diasporas are the following. Safran's extra qualifications narrow the field of alternative terms that compete with diaspora through their attention to the range of experiences and activities a collective of this kind would be participating in. According to Safran, members of a diaspora partake in communal and individual activities that set them aside from other communities, and, unlike Conner's definition, they do not exist in a social vacuum. Moreover, Safran's six characteristics are a good starting point for understanding diasporas as they highlight the triangular relationship that comes into play between host, home and diaspora in the generation of a diasporic identity. As the etymology of the term has revealed in this chapter (Section 3.1), diasporas are the result of scattering. Hence, they have to be scattered from some place to somewhere else in order to be something.

Despite these two positive qualities, there are aspects of Safran's list that require some refinement in order to be more helpful. Firstly, although the list is constructed from the Jewish experience and Safran's considered belief that the Jews are the 'ideal type' of diaspora, there are multiple examples within Jewish history when the Jews themselves do not conform to Safran's list (Clifford, 1997: 248). As

it shall be seen in Chapter Six, Jewish history contains numerous examples that make Safran's ideal diaspora of the Jews fail his checklist. More specifically, in the order of Safran's list:

(1) the specific location of a Jewish homeland is hazy;

(2) the desire to return has not been a constant feature through time amongst the Jews;

(3) there are many periods in Jewish history where they have assimilated or expressed a desire to do so;

(4) there has never been a constant return movement within the Jewish community;

(5) Orthodox Jews are not committed to actively restoring their homeland as that is to be done by their Saviour; and

(6) although the idea of a homeland has featured prominently in the development of a communal consciousness, there has not been consensus on the location of this homeland.

In the light of the above, it becomes difficult to hold that those groups Safran wants to be classified as diasporas – the Armenians, Maghrebis, Turks, Palestinians, Cubans, Greeks and Chinese of the present and the Poles of the past – may live up to the characteristics contained in his list.

Admittedly, Safran does not stringently enforce his checklist. For example, he acknowledges that even amongst the Jews the idea of literally returning home has not held true as return has been a 'largely eschatological concept' used as a tool 'to make life more tolerable by holding out a utopia or eutopia' in comparison to the

'perceived dystopia where actual life is lived' (Safran, 1991: 94). The lack of enforcement of the list however leads to the second aspect of Safran's project that may require refinement. Safran develops an ideal definition of diaspora which, as he acknowledges, may be unattainable. As a result, any groups potentially qualifying to be defined as a diaspora have to undergo a subsequent test that examines the degree to which they conform to the six traits of a diaspora as identified by Safran. Thus, not only are analysts faced with having to decide whether a particular group is a diaspora, it also becomes necessary to make a decision on how diasporic a group actually is. Even if this can be attained, the question remains how different groups possessing different degrees of diasporic characteristics can be compared to one another. To confuse matters even further, there is also the added complication of how many of the criteria does a group needs to fulfil in order to be considered a diaspora.

Finally, although Safran's correctly points out that diasporas have a tense relationship with their host (point 3) and there is a return movement within diasporas (point 4), he has framed the relationship between diaspora and host as one of constant tension. It could be argued instead that the relationship between host and diaspora may not be one of persistent strain but may be a relationship that runs the whole gamut of possibilities.[5] It could be held that Safran's position understands diasporas as being in competition with their hosts and thus creating a state of constant tension. In this sense, neither diaspora nor host are to benefit from their interaction thus explaining why diasporas according to Safran have a desire to return home where they can avoid this constant battle. It is possible, however, that diasporas and their hosts have a relationship that is based on parasitism or perhaps cooperation. Diasporas may be considered parasitical in the sense that they flourish

by exploiting the infrastructure offered by states (for example, the enforcement of contracts) without offering the loyalty that most states demand. Alternatively, the relationship may be mutually beneficial as diasporas may act as a bridge in dealings between host and home.

In spite of the difficulties in arriving at the defining characteristics of diaspora found in this strand of diaspora theorising, the above discussion has revealed some important points brought up in its work. Firstly, this strand of diaspora theorising demonstrates the difficulty in attaining a cut and dried definition of diaspora. Secondly, and related to the first point, as Safran's work has shown, any understanding of diasporas will necessarily have to engage with the relationship between host, home and diaspora in constructing a diasporic experience. Finally, as Safran alludes to but does not expand on by maintaining that one can speak of the 'Polish diaspora of the past', any understanding of diaspora will have to be flexible enough to accommodate the waxing and waning in diasporic identification through time and place. Thus, in attempting to understand diasporas, one has to contend with the concept's fluid nature and flexible membership when seeking to answer questions such as 'can diasporas cease to exist?' and if they do, 'can they re-emerge?'

3.2.2 Diasporas as a Typology

Approaches within the second school attempt to come to terms with a wide range of diasporic experiences by dividing diasporas in a typology. Similar to the first approach to defining diasporas, the scholars of this school do not forward a single position but pursue instead multiple approaches to classifying diasporas.[6] The

unifying aspect of their various approaches is that they begin with a definition of diaspora followed by a division of diasporas into particular types.

One of the first attempts to deepen the understanding of diasporas through some form of classification has been made by John Armstrong (1976). According to Armstrong, diasporas can be characterised as 'any ethnic collectivity which lacks a territorial base within a given polity, i.e., is a relatively small minority throughout all portions of the polity' (Armstrong, 1976: 393). From this broad characterisation, Armstrong divides diasporas into proletarian and mobilised diasporas. Mobilised diasporas are described as possessing great material and cultural resources that they employ to modernise and mobilise in order to offer their host state valuable services and skills (Armstrong, 1976: 394-397). Proletarian diasporas, in contrast, are characterised by limited communication skills and are comprised of 'a nearly undifferentiated mass of unskilled labour' (Armstrong, 1976: 405). For Armstrong, examples of proletarian diasporas are the Poles and the Italians of interwar France. Examples of mobilised diasporas are the Jews, Armenians and the Chinese. In addition, mobilised diasporas may be further subdivided into archetypical (Jews and Armenians) and situational (Chinese) diasporas with permanence characterising the diasporic condition of the former as opposed to a transitory nature of the diasporic condition of the latter (Armstrong, 1976: 394). The key reason for this difference in the diasporic condition lies with the diaspora's ability to construct strong myths surrounding its distinctiveness. Here, the Jewish diaspora is held to be archetypical as the myths constructed about its distinctiveness are built around more emotionally intense structures such as Judaism. The Chinese diasporic condition on the contrary is considered temporary as myths of distinctiveness are seen to be less intense since they are built around being part of a greater civilisation.

Regardless of whether one agrees with Armstrong's rather broad understanding of diasporas, the discussion here focuses instead on his further classification of diasporas into mobilised, proletarian, archetypical and temporary subsets. With his classifications, Armstrong accurately highlights the role played by material and cultural resources at hand in shaping both the relationship between a diaspora and its host as well as the diaspora itself. For example, by offering skills to the colonial administrators of Southeast Asia and by possessing a myth of civilisational distinctiveness, the Chinese as a mobilised diaspora were more successful in economic, social and political terms than the descendents of African slaves in North America who may be conceived of as a proletarian diaspora. Furthermore, Armstrong's division between archetypical and temporary diasporas allows for an appreciation of the role played by myths of distinctiveness in influencing the durability of a diaspora's borders. Assimilation is more of a possibility if the myths of distinctiveness are fungible, facilitating weak boundary maintenance (Armstrong, 1976: 395). Assimilation is less of a possibility if difference has sacral resources – such as the case of Judaism for the Jews – as the myths of distinctiveness are strong. (Armstrong, 1976: 396).

It may be helpful to make some refinements to Armstrong's schema. First, all diasporas contain mobilised and proletarian elements at any one time. At all times and in all places, diasporas are composed of both the upwardly mobile and the socio-economically disadvantaged. For example, within the Jews and Chinese, all three diasporic groups have had highly mobile and wealthy elites, a comfortable middle class and an underclass (Sowell, 1996). Second, occupational mobility can radically alter the diasporic profile of a group in Armstrong's classification. The two exemplars of Armstrong's proletarian diasporas are the Italian and Polish diasporas

in interwar France who spoke French poorly and whose occupations were predominately concentrated around low-paying jobs. Although there may still be some who fall within this category, it is difficult to argue that these two groups still retain such a position in post-war France (Cohen, 1997: 59). Third, while it may be possible to hold Armstrong's classification for a specific diaspora at a particular locale – for example, the Chinese as a temporarily mobilised diaspora in Southeast Asia during colonisation, Armstrong's classification cannot be sustained for the same diaspora over time and place. Different locations offer differing opportunities that result in multiple ways in which difference (or indifference) may be expressed. Using the Jews as an example, one can see how religion played a great role in defining Jewish identity in Eastern Europe. Here, their presence was less welcomed than in North America where one sees the minor role played by Judaism in shaping Jewish identity. Based on these three difficulties surrounding Armstrong's classification, it is possible to hold that the key problem is that diasporas are constituted as much of difference and division as they are of solidarity and commonality (Anthias, 1998: 564). In sum, the classifications put forward by Armstrong may capture a specific moment in history for a particular diaspora but they cannot always be sustained through time and in different places.

A different attempt to develop a typology of diasporas is offered by Robin Cohen (1997). For Cohen, the notion of diaspora has transcended the rather narrow traditional connotations of exile, pain and loss. Refining Safran's checklist, Cohen defines diasporas as communities that possess the following nine features:

(1) dispersal from an original homeland, often traumatically, to two or more foreign regions;

(2) alternatively, the expansion from a homeland in search of work, in pursuit of trade or to further colonial ambitions;

(3) a collective memory and myth about the homeland, including its location, history and achievements;

(4) an idealization of the putative ancestral home and a collective commitment to its maintenance, restoration, safety and prosperity, even to its creation;

(5) the development of a return movement that gains collective approbation;

(6) a strong ethnic group consciousness sustained over a long time and based on a sense of distinctiveness, a common history and the belief in a common fate;

(7) the troubled relationship with host societies, suggesting a lack of acceptance at the least or the possibility that another calamity might befall the group;

(8) a sense of empathy and solidarity with co-ethnic members in other countries of settlement; and

(9) the possibility of a distinctive creative, enriching life in host countries with a tolerance of pluralism (Cohen, 1997: 26).

While Cohen acknowledges that diasporas may take multiple forms or change their characteristics over time, he uses his definition to construct a number of classifications of diaspora: classical diasporas (Jews); victim diasporas (Africans and Armenians); labour and imperial diasporas (Indians and British); trade diasporas (Chinese and Lebanese); diasporas in search of homelands (Sikhs and Zionists); and cultural diasporas (Caribbean peoples).

Cohen's definition of diasporas highlights several important features of diasporas. Unlike other migrant groups, what makes a diaspora distinct is a sense of solidarity with their fellow members in other countries (point 8). Furthermore, rather

than framing the diasporic experience as one of continual tension with its host, Cohen's definition holds open the prospect for a diaspora to have a flourishing life in a country that is tolerant of diversity (point 9). Unlike Safran, Cohen's position holds open the possibility that the relationship may be one that is mutually beneficial. Finally, like Safran's, Cohen's definition requires members of a diaspora to engage in activities that make them distinct – for example, engaging with host and home and fostering a common identity – rather than taking for granted that difference is organic and ever-present. Despite highlighting these important points, Cohen's insistence on an unproblematised and unified understanding of home (point 1, 3, 4 and 5) by those of a diaspora makes his definition open to some of the same criticisms as Safran's. The location of home for most of Cohen's diasporas such as Jews, Africans and Chinese has not been unchanging, uniformly agreed upon sites as their locations fluctuate between places and over time.

Cohen's understanding of diasporas has several positive points as mentioned above. However, his classification of diasporas into different typologies based on the reasons for dispersal necessitates the engagement with questions surrounding difference and diversity as well as the availability of material and cultural resources. With regard to difference and diversity, Cohen's typology may be improved by moving away from its overly descriptive nature and its subsequent inability to provide an adequate schema for comparisons between diasporas (Anthias, 1998: 563). Within his typology, in some instances it is the occupation that affects its classification (labour, trading), in others it is an experience (victim) or penetration (imperial), and in another it is the development of a particular culture (culture). Therefore, within his different types of diasporas, there is little way in which one can compare them to one another. Moreover, similar to Armstrong, difference and

diversity within a diaspora under Cohen's typology remains unrecognised. For example, Cohen brands the Chinese as a trade diaspora which is grouped together without further division or difference. This is conducted despite evidence that over different periods and in different places, those within the Chinese diaspora have come from different places, speak different languages, have moved for different reasons and have engaged in different types of work (Wang, 2000). In a related point, Cohen's typology does not engage fully with the different material and cultural resources available within and between diasporas that play a role in their continued diasporic condition. Nonetheless, an engagement with the availability of these resources is crucial as it would reveal whether assimilation is a possibility and/or the reasons why specific diasporas continue to exist. Hence, to improve on Cohen's typology, there is a need to account for diversity as much as commonality within a diaspora in addition to the manner in which the availability of different material and cultural resources account for their continued survival.

3.2.3 *Diaspora as a Condition*

The third and final approach to understanding diasporas is one that comprehends the term as a condition as opposed to a characterisation of a group thus alluding to a connection between groups across different states whose commonality derives from an idea of an original homeland. This commonality allows for a new identity to be forged on a global scale that crosses state boundaries. The scholars associated with this school of thought are diverse. In this section, the works of Stuart Hall, Paul Gilroy and James Clifford are used to give shape to the theoretical perspective. What is of interest is the nature of the diasporic identities constructed from the disjointed

condition of being from one place *and* of another as 'wherever one finds diasporas, one always finds precisely those complicated processes of negotiation and transculturation' (Hall, 1995: 7). As discussed Section 3.2.1 above, to be part of a community goes beyond merely existing as it requires some form of action. Therefore, their work is of significance in understanding and defining diasporas as they analyse what a community and its individual members need to think, feel, experience, or do to be considered a diaspora. To reiterate, to be part of a diaspora involves more than simply existing as interaction between its members is essential for its sustained existence. This point is particularly significant as it implies that diasporas may cease to exist if the interaction stops.

Stuart Hall makes clear from the outset that he uses the term *diaspora* metaphorically and that he has no desire for the concept to bundle people into an identity that 'can only be secured in relation to some sacred homeland to which they must at all costs return, even if it means pushing other people into the sea' (Hall, 1990: 237). He maintains 'diaspora identities are those which are constantly producing themselves anew through transformation and difference' (Hall, 1990: 237). Although identities for Hall have histories and have come from somewhere, they are always in process and never complete. Instead, they are subjected to the 'continuous play of history, culture and power' (Hall, 1990: 222-225). Thus, using diasporas as a critique of essentialism, diasporas show that one does not lose all sense of identity when one abandons an essentialist reading of identity, as history acts as an anchor in making 'your difference different from my difference' dependent upon one's routes rather than one's roots (Hall, 1997: 34). The importance of identificational avenues and opportunities for Hall's position should be stressed. Although diasporic identity for Hall involves agency on the part of the

diasporic individual, the choices made are constrained by a combination of what has been articulated previously, the recognition of others and the structures in place. For Hall, 'far from only coming from the still small point of truth inside us, identities actually come from outside, they are the way in which we are recognised and then come to step into the place of the recognitions which others give us. Without the others there is no self, there is no self-recognition' (Hall, 1995: 8).

Along the same lines to Hall's work is Paul Gilroy's writing, who seeks to apply the concept of diaspora to understand the difference and 'sameness' of the connective identity that is held by nationally different Black groups (Gilroy, 1993a). Thus, for Gilroy, to be part of a diaspora is to think, feel and act in a manner that is shared by others of the same group. Building on WEB Du Bois' famous theory of the condition of 'double consciousness' (Du Bois, 1999), Gilroy's sees this diasporic identity as a challenge to ethnic absolutism as it is an identity that disputes the idea of roots by being an identity that 'ain't where you are from, it's where you are at' (Gilroy, 1993b: 121). Consequently, the identity that is created, shared and recreated between nationally different Black groups though constantly shifting is not nothing either. For Gilroy, a comparison may be struck between diasporic identity and the dynamics of jazz where

> [t]here is... a cruel contradiction implicit in the art form itself. For true jazz is an art of individual assertion within and against the group. Each true jazz movement.... springs from a contest in which the artist challenges all the rest, each solo flight, or improvisation, represents (like the canvasses of a painter) a definition of his identity: as individual, as member of the collectivity and as a link in the chain of tradition. Thus because jazz finds its very life in improvisation upon traditional material, the jazzman must lose his identity even as he finds it.... (Ellison, 1972: 234).

This constant development and change can continue indefinitely. By using the image of totality and infinity within fractal geometry,[7] Gilroy argues that there is always the possibility for agency in restricted conditions (Gilroy, 1993: 144).

From this condition of being from somewhere and of another, a diasporic identity is created that balances roots and routes where the social unities around the nation become destabilised and challenged (Clifford, 1997). Diasporic identity, for Clifford, challenges the conventional nationalist narrative of tying identity to place as well as autochthonous claims of tribe (Clifford, 1997: 250). The nationalist narrative is challenged as it cannot accommodate a group that maintains allegiances and practical connections to a homeland or a dispersed community elsewhere. In addition, diasporas challenge claims of tribe that stress continuity and connection to a specific land. Diasporic claims of belonging do not stem from claims of inhabiting an original territory since they require the right to inhabit a different territory to their constructed and deferred homeland. Diasporas thus call the basic autochthonous claim into question: how long does a territory have to be inhabited by a group for such claims to be made? Though Clifford does not mention this, it could also be held that diasporas expose the vacuity of some forms of cosmopolitanism where 'citizens of the world' is the only identity (Hall, 1997: 34). Even though more and more people are on the move around the globe, identity does not dissolve away as diasporas emphasise how people have histories and have to come from somewhere.

Gilroy and Clifford are not without their critics (Anthias, 1998, Helmreich, 1992). For example, though sympathetic to Gilroy and Hall's positions, Stefan Helmreich charges Gilroy's position with unwittingly privileging a shared heritage over an understanding of identity that is constructed from shared experiences and resistances (Helmreich, 1992: 247).[8] If one was to consider Gilroy's likening of jazz

to diasporic identity formation, 'jazz finds its very life in improvisation upon traditional material' in the same manner that kinship between all Africans is the 'traditional material' that it is improvised upon. Accordingly, 'organic and self-evident communities, recognised through a shared origin, are endowed in the postmodern version with "global" eyes' (Anthias, 1998: 569). Additionally, both Clifford and Gilroy have been criticised for failing to recognise that their use of the term diaspora is gendered and sexist (Anthias, 1998: 569, Helmreich: 1992: 245). In illustration, not only do they use the gendered idea of a fatherland but they also use the sexist analogy of the seeds or sperm of the father in relation to the concept of diaspora. These critiques should not be dismissed prematurely as they are both interesting and highlight clear flaws within theories of this school. Instead, it could be held that the above failings are not crucial but merely highlight a need for greater refinement and sensitivity. The charge of the privileging of kinship levelled against Gilroy may be avoided if the 'traditional material' referred to is qualified to mean the restrictions placed by history and experience on what can be said now.[9] As argued by Hall, the past narrows the field of possibilities for identity as what has been said before restricts what can be imagined now (Hall, 1997: 35). As for the accusation of sexism, as the work of Avtar Brah (1996) seems to rectify, the response would quite simply be that these theories need to deal with the experiences and roles played by women in contributing to and enabling the development of a diasporic identity.

The critiques of their positions should not obscure the contributions this school of diaspora theorising has brought to understanding the social collective and the condition that allows its fruition. Despite being unconcerned with a descriptive understanding of diasporas, the processual nature of the diasporic condition

highlighted by members of this school of thought where diasporic identity is a site of negotiation, assimilation and resistance points towards the need for definitions of diaspora to be able to accommodate flux. Furthermore, the role played by the relationship between host, home, diaspora and individual in constructing this diasporic identity has been given greater clarity. An important extension to this point is that their understanding of diasporas as condition highlights the way identity for diaspora, host, home and individual is constantly created and recreated thus pointing towards the possibility that difference, though necessary for the creation of identity, need not be in constant tension. One can be different from another in many ways – those ways need not always be one where cooperation and mutual respect is unattainable.

What is more, if one's cultural identity is anchored in one's history and history is under constant transformation, home may be relocated to any site where one feels one belongs. Just as identity is open to the imagination, home undergoes the same re-articulations and reformulations. In general, home becomes an entire social world where it is 'not so much where you were as the place you wanted to be, a place as much imagined as remembered or experienced' (O'Toole, 1997: 168). Following from this, the nature of the diasporic home may be understood in the same manner as identity. It is both historically real and imagined. The concept of home experiences the same exercise in selective memory in its conception as does identity in its articulation. The concept of home for a diaspora is not fixed and its location may fluctuate over time. This has led one observer to describe the concept of home for diasporas as a 'homing desire' (Brah, 1996: 180). Similar to the role of religion as a provider of solace in times of need (Weber, 1965: 109), home for the diaspora is a place 'out there' where they belonged and it is integral to constructing a

diasporic identity as it acts as one of the binds through which members are moored together.

For the members of a diaspora, your homeland should not be understood in the essentialist sense, as you can never truly return home. Treating it in an essentialist sense often leads to disappointment when you return. As many of the Jewish diaspora discovered with the creation of Israel, home is not the Promised Land where one goes to become whole. If one attempts to do so, both a sense of familiarity along with difference is felt – but reality never matches the representation in one's head. It is a soothing idea that permits everything to change and yet still remain constant. During the explosion of the Rastafarian movement in the 1960s, many Jamaicans decided to return 'home' to the motherland only to be disappointed (Hall, 1995: 12). The Africa that they remembered or heard of did not remain in a state of tribal purity but had moved on. 'There was no fifteenth-century mother waiting to succour her children. So, in that literal sense, they wanted to go somewhere else, they wanted to go to the other place that had intervened, that other Africa which was constructed in the language and rituals of Rastafarianism' (Hall, 1995: 12).

The interaction between home and its diaspora is a two-way process; the experience of one constantly forces a re-evaluation of the other. In Fintan O'Toole's *The Lie of the Land*, he draws attention to the fact that the Minor Planet Centre in the United States had recently named an asteroid orbiting the Earth 'Ireland' (O'Toole, 1997:176).

> Minor Planet Ireland is far away.... And almost nothing is known about its composition. It bears, in other words, a similar relation to terrestrial Ireland as the emergent Ireland of imaginative connections does to the physical

> Ireland in the Atlantic.... Ireland had long had its satellites, its exiled communities orbiting the motherland. But it is not so long since people thought that all the planets went around the earth and had to suffer the psychic shock of finding out that it was the other way around. These days it gets harder to shake off the thought, absurd but insistent, the Minor Planet Ireland, the distant place called after the familiar one, is not the imagined asteroid, but the real green island that used to be at the edge of Europe (O'Toole, 1997: 172).

The process described has been dubbed by Phil Cohen as the 'Copernican revolution' of understanding of diasporas (Cohen, P, 1999: 21-22). This revolution refers to the acceptance that diasporas do not revolve around the motherland but both motherland and diasporas (and it may be added 'host') revolve around one another. They spin around each other and neither is wholly independent. As such, neither are stable entities and Ireland, true Ireland, only resides in the interplay of history and imagination. Through the remembering of the past and the inventing of the future, this network of recollection and imagination is what makes a diaspora.

3.3 An Alternative Characterisation of Diaspora: A New Addition to a Crowded Constellation

Having discussed the expressions of identity located at the boundaries of diasporas followed by a discussion on the differing concerns and understandings found in three different approaches to the term, it is possible to identify five important features of diaspora that are of concern to this thesis. Firstly, any understanding of diaspora must be able to reflect the fluid nature of the diasporic experience with the ebb and flow of its identification. As identity is strategic and reflexive and as the

location of home fluctuates as a response to the shifts in identity, the term diaspora may be used in a manner where sensitivity is shown towards the transient and persistent nature of the diasporic moment. The moment is temporary as individuals that possess the potential to be part of a diaspora may wax and wane in their identification with it. When this moment experienced by an individual is shared and acted upon by like-minded others, a diasporic community takes shape with identifiable characteristics. Secondly, the different material and cultural resources available to and between diasporas must be acknowledged in order to better understand the heterogeneity within its ranks and between diasporas. Not all diasporas possess the same material and cultural tools and this affects the manner in which their experience of being in-between places is lived. Thirdly, any understanding of diasporas has to also take into consideration commonality within and between diasporas. Commonality within a diaspora is important as it allows members to identify with each other in their day-to-day lives. Identifying the commonality between diasporas allows for comparison between their experiences. Fourthly, one of the key elements for the formation of a diasporic identity is the presence of a home. To be part of a diaspora is to be able to believe that there are ties with somewhere else. Home may be 'real' or imagined and its location may change but its role is key to the formation of a diasporic identity. Finally, there are many different possible relationships diasporas may have with their hosts – it does not have to be one of continuous competition or antagonism.

In the final section of this chapter, building on the discussion thus far, an addition to the competing understandings of diaspora is forwarded. It addresses the five points above and argues for diasporas to be understood as both a condition and a

process. In this thesis, diasporas are communities that satisfy the following four characterisations:

1. The population has experienced a multipolarity of migration – a dispersion from a point of origin, that is 'home', which is far and wide. As there are a surplus of terms vying to describe and understand human migration, the multipolarity of migration for the creation of a diaspora sets it aside from other terms such as migrants, border communities, guest workers, expatriates and ethnic minorities. Diasporas, in the course of their histories, have of course included elements of all these other experiences but these experiences by themselves are unable to constitute a diaspora.

2. Home may be 'real' or imagined and its location is not static but may fluctuate over time. Shared in common by all the various understandings of diaspora discussed, members of a diaspora have to believe that they are from or of somewhere else other than where they are. The presence of a home somewhere else is key to the formation of a diasporic identity as it allows for the creation of such an identity. To be 'neither here nor there' enables diasporas to acquire experiences and histories from both here and there to create something new. Admittedly, this home may not be an existing physical place and its location may not be unanimously agreed upon but its idea and its employment as a tool to create a uniquely diasporic identity are held by all.

3. There is interpolarity in the relationship between members of a diaspora – interaction not only with the perceived home but also between the many nodes of a diaspora. Related to characteristics 1 and 2, to be part of a diaspora involves more than merely existing and interaction between its members is fundamental for its continued existence. This point is noteworthy as it implies diasporas may cease to exist if the interaction stops. For example, a Jewish community cut off from the rest of the other nodes of a diaspora ceases to be part of the Jewish diaspora as its members are unable to share in the diasporic moment where members interact to form a uniquely diasporic identity. Without such an interaction, members slip away to be part of other groups and can be captured by other terms such as ethnic minority or migrant community. There is a further salience to this point as it accepts the ebb and flow of diasporic identification. It accepts diasporic identity as the remembering and reinterpretation of the past in order to find one's place in the present and to position oneself for the future. Therefore, members of a diaspora may assimilate but the tie of their history provides them the narrative or historical tools to return to the diasporic fold. Finally, interaction between the nodes holds open the possibility for diasporic identity within a diaspora to take multiple forms. Just as identity may appear in varying degrees, diasporic identity is no exception. Interaction may result in the formation of an identity that is as innocuous as a celebration of culture or it may take a more aggressive form in, for example, nationalist, separatist or irredentist guises.

4. Diasporas and their 'hosts' may have a mutually beneficial and enriching life together. Adapted from Robin Cohen's ninth and final characteristic of diasporas (Cohen, 1997: 26) and related to the different degrees in which identity may express itself as well as the multiple ways in which two groups may have relations, members of a diaspora need not be in perpetual competition or antagonism with their hosts. Cohen is of the view that diasporas may have 'the possibility of a distinctive, creative, enriching life in host countries with a tolerance of pluralism (Cohen, 1997: 26). This is a position that moves away from the traditional negative overtones of diaspora by maintaining that it need not always be an experience filled with hurt and suffering. As highlighted in Chapter Two, biology offers at least seven different forms of interaction between species and the relationship between host and diaspora may span the whole spectrum of possibilities (Mahon and McGrath, 1975: 388). For example, the relationship may be one of commensalism where the diaspora is advantaged but the host is unaffected or it may be one of cooperation where both parties are beneficiaries of their continued relationship.

The above characterisation of diasporas is built upon the insights of the alternative characterisations discussed in Section 3.2 of this chapter. It offers an understanding of diasporas that is able to capture their transient yet persistent nature. By focussing on the nature of diasporic identity and the relationship between individual, diaspora, host and home from contemporary understandings of diaspora, it is a position that corresponds with the discussion in Chapter Two on the reflexive and strategic nature of identity. Such a position offers four clear advantages in attempting to understand

diasporas whilst allowing for their experiences to inform theories on multiculturalism.

Firstly, following the previous discussion on diasporas as condition, the definition of diasporas here is sufficiently fluid to accommodate fluctuations in its membership. Eschewing the idea of identity as an unchanging mutually shared essence and viewing it as a process and a narrative, this definition is better able to capture the diasporic moment when a diasporic identity, though fleeting, is forged. It is this diasporic identity captured in the moment that allows members to interact and act as a collective as well as to identify each other. An analogy may be struck here between diasporas and any team sport. For example, members of a basketball team have the required skills to be part of any basketball team. However, they make a choice to be part of a particular one. Outside of the game and training days, their membership to this team takes a step back in place of other forms of identity – for example, the identity of a parent or a lecturer. It is only when they train together and play together that they take on the identity of basketball players and act in unison as a team.

In a related point, the second advantage of this definition of diaspora is that a uniquely diasporic identity is created if the four characteristics are present. This diasporic identity is separate from other collectives created by migration. The multipolarity of migration, the interpolarity of interaction, the use of the idea of home in constructing an identity and a continually negotiated relationship with a host all act together to form a uniquely diasporic identity as well as a unique transnational collective. Staying with the basketball analogy, the team when they come together to train and play do so as a basketball team. There are similarities with their sport to others such as football or netball but these similarities are not

enough for them to be considered the same sport. Likewise, when all four characteristics are met, though possessing similar characteristics to migrant communities, border communities or ethnic minorities, members of a diaspora possess enough uniqueness to be recognized as distinct.

The third advantage of this definition of diaspora is that it is aware of, and accepts that there is as much commonality and solidarity within a diaspora as there is difference and discord. Members of a diaspora do not have to adhere to the same beliefs or customs to be deemed as such. There are more often than not disagreements within a diaspora but the fact remains that if they engage with one another, there must be a base level of identity that allows members to recognise each other to have such a disagreement. As with basketball, members of a team may have disagreements over who should be in the team or how the game should be played but they nonetheless are still part of the same team (or at least desire to play the same sport). Similarly for a diaspora, using the Chinese as an example, the Chinese come from different places in China, have a different idea of where home is (for example: a village, town, province, state or idea), and have various understandings of what being Chinese is. However, there is enough commonality within this difference for them to engage with one another as Chinese people to have such disagreements in the first place.

Recognising that there is the presence of some form of commonality, this understanding of diasporas allows for a comparison within and between diasporas. Rather than a search for authenticity where one may point at a specific diasporic identity – such as a belief in Judaism for a diasporic Jew – to be considered the ultimate defining characteristic of a diaspora, an appreciation of the discordance within a diaspora opens up avenues of analysis that seek to discover what are the

competing alternatives and the manner in which they interact with one another. Along the same vein, such an understanding of diasporas allows for a comparison between them that may focus on issues such as whether different material, cultural and historical tools available to different diasporas lead to different expressions of identity. Most importantly for this thesis, this ability to compare within and between diasporas allows one to understand why such an identity has an appeal over others on offer and the different degrees of its expression.

It is necessary here not to overstate the ability to create an identity simply through voicing an awareness of an identity. Although diasporas may sometimes define themselves, diasporic identity as a self-willed creation should not be overemphasised. Though agency plays an important role in diasporic identity formation, agency may only be allowed to play this role within a favourable structural context. While the ease and speed of modern day travel and communication have enabled diasporas to establish and maintain their identities, structural and political impediments may prevent them from doing so. As highlighted by Armstrong's division of diasporas into mobilised and proletariat subsets, mobilised diasporas are better placed than proletariat diasporas to create and preserve their identity as they possess far greater material and cultural resources that can be employed to mobilise themselves. (Armstrong, 1976: 394-397 and 405). Moreover, as apartheid South Africa and Germany during the Third Reich are testament to, political and social structures may be constructed in a manner that cuts out agency altogether. The state in both these cases identified the individual, thus either limiting or eliminating an individual's ability to define him/herself. Thus, both structure and agency play a part in the ability to create a diasporic identity.

3.4 Concluding Remarks

By analysing the borders of diasporas as well as discussing the various understandings and definitions of the term, a new characterisation of diasporas is advanced. Expressed in another fashion, the characterisation put forward here is one that recognises diasporas to be a creation of the widespread dispersal of a community from a point they believe they share. Its constituents interact with each other thus creating a uniquely diasporic identity that forms a balance between where they are from and where they are at present. Membership to this community is fluid and can only be created by working at it. Therefore, being part of a diaspora, like other social collectives, requires effort on the part of its members. This position stands apart from essentialised notions of diaspora that consider its individual members part of a diaspora bound to each other and a homeland by mere existence. It also stands separately from understandings of diaspora that ties individuals together in a collective founded upon the sharing of the availability of 'boundary-crossing multiplicity' (Tölöyan, 1996: 30). For example, not all African Americans are members of a diaspora because they have the ability to either accentuate, amongst other identities, their American-ness or their African-ness. They become members of a diaspora when they interact with each other and their fellow members spread around the globe.

The next three chapters of the thesis engage with the diasporic episodes of the Chinese, Africans and Jews. While most studies on diaspora take the Jewish experience as the paradigmatic example of diasporic experience, the approach taken here allows the Chinese (Chapter 4) and African experiences (Chapter 5) to shed a different and more complex light on the diasporic experience by focussing on these

two episodes first. This in turn has a bearing on the manner in which the Jewish experience, which will only be discussed in Chapter 6, is understood.

Termed *episodes* in an effort to resist the traditional positivist overtones of *case study*, these three experiences are employed to illuminate and inform the more abstract discussions in the past two chapters. Additionally, matching the fluid nature of the diasporic experience, the three experiences are episodic in character as not only do their individual experiences continue to develop and reveal more of themselves, they do so correspondingly for each other. All three episodes are used to demonstrate the multiplicity of diasporic identities on offer throughout their histories as well as the role of home in their identity formation. It is shown that far from possessing some shared essence, diasporas contain as much difference as they do commonality. Despite these differences, their members engage and interact with one another to arrive at a diasporic identity where they share in the diasporic moment. As diasporic identities have multiple degrees of expression, the identity fashioned within this shared diasporic moment need not be an identity that is in contest with or antagonistic of their hosts.

With regard to the key concern of this thesis, namely the attempt to show the weaknesses of Liberalism 1 and 2 stemming from their static understanding of identity, the different degrees to which diasporic identity is expressed is correlated to the different multicultural policies they experienced. As the experience of the Chinese, Africans and Jews will illustrate, the appearance and articulation of diasporic identities between groups vary by degree. To use the example of the diasporic Chinese, Chinese-ness (as we shall shortly see) may be non-confrontational in the sense of being partial to a particular way of dress or diet. Alternatively, it may be more structured when used as a banner under which those of

the same identity gather to conduct, for example, business. In the most extreme, difference can take the form of a call for separation where the difference has become so 'real' that the only option is to separate from the dominant society. The highlighting of the similarities between the Chinese, African and Jewish diasporas, with regard to the fluctuating nature of identity, permits a sustained and detailed engagement with the episode of the Jews in history and their experience in Liberalism 1 and 2. Therefore, although the diasporic episodes of the Chinese and Africans partially illustrate the problems with Liberalism 1 and 2, it is only within the episode of the Jews that this thesis brings together the points raised in all three episodes to comprehensively illustrate how Liberalism 1 and 2 are generally unable to accommodate diasporas in their attempt to secure long-term harmony in a polity due to an over-reliance on the incarceration of individuals and groups to specific petrified identities. Both Liberalism 1 and 2 do not fully consider the variations of difference, endeavouring to manage all its forms in an identical manner. As such, both seem to forward political solutions that either ignore all difference or seek to reify it.

Endnotes to Chapter Three:

[1] The concept of diaspora may be considered an essentially contested concept understood in the same vein as that forwarded by W.B. Gallie (1968). For Gallie, essentially contested concepts are concepts whose use is inevitably surrounded by irresolvable disputes between their users about their proper application (Gallie, 1968: 158). Although these disputes are genuine in the sense that they are supported by perfectly reasonable arguments and evidence, none of these understandings of such concepts need to be the correct one. Terms that are essentially contested concepts contain a multitude of competing understandings each of which champion different aspects of the term. When approaching such concepts, one does not look for the correctness of specific understandings but merely looks for the history of specific understandings – how and why terms are used and understood in the way that they are. Examples of essentially contested subjects offered by Gallie include concepts such as democracy, art and religion.

[2] This report may be viewed at www.unpopulation.org. All statistics here have been attained from this site.

[3] For examples of the traditional sedentarist position, see: Gellner, E. (1983), *Nations and Nationalism*, Oxford: Blackwell and Smith, AD. (1991) *National Identity*, London: Penguin Books. For positions that attempt to circumvent the sedentarist position, see: Malkki, L. (1992), 'National Geographic: the Rooting of Peoples and the Territorialization of National Identity Among Scholars and Refugees', *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 7, No. 1., Pg. 24-44 and Deleuze, G. and Guattari, F. (1987), *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, London: Anthlone Press.

[4] Safran quite rightly notes that, 'Today, "diaspora" and, more specifically, "diaspora community" seem to be used as metaphoric designations for several categories of people – expatriates, expellees, political refugees, alien residents, immigrants, and ethnic and racial communities *tout court* – in much the same way that "ghetto" has come to designate all kinds of crowed constricted, and disprivileged urban environments, and "holocaust" has come to be applied to all kinds of mass murder (Safran, 1991: 83). For an example of terms such as exile, expatriate and émigré are used interchangeably with diaspora, see the *Economist's* special report on diasporas (*Economist*, 04/01/2003).

[5] For a list of other possible types of relationship, please see the previous chapter, Section 2.2.2, Pg. 20.

[6] The work of John Armstrong (1972) and Robin Cohen (1997) will be utilised here as examples of defining diasporas through a typology. Their work is by no means the only examples of such an approach. For alternatives, see also Mishra, V., (1996), 'The diasporic imaginary: theorizing the Indian diaspora', *Textual Practice*, Vol. 10, No. 3, Pg. 421-447. Mishra here divides the Indian diaspora into a diaspora of exclusivism and of the border. The former is considered an 'old' form of diaspora where self-contained 'little Indias' were created in the colonies whilst the latter is considered 'new' where mobility and hybridity are the key defining characteristics.

[7] For this image of totality and infinity within fractal geometry, consider the ability to divide a finite length infinitely.

[8] For Helmreich, Gilroy's Black Atlantic 'seems to privilege shared heritage – figured through a patriarchal metaphor for inheritance – over hybridity' (Helmeich, 1992: 247). Aspects of Gilroy's work do indeed seem to hold such a view. Gilroy argues, 'The ideologies and beliefs of new world Blacks exhibit characteristically African conceptions of the relationship between art and life, the sacred and the secular, the spiritual and the material. Traces of these African formulations remain, albeit in displaced and mediated forms, even in the folk philosophies, religion, and vernacular art of black Britain' (Gilroy, 1987: 159).

[9] Gilroy is not insensitive to this criticism. Elsewhere he has maintained, 'I am against the rhetoric of cultural insiderism, whatever its source, because I think it is too readily linked to unacceptable ideas of homogeneous national culture and exclusionary national or ethnic belonging' (Gilroy, 1993c: 72).

Chapter Four: The Chinese Diaspora

Association with the term diaspora for the Chinese overseas began when similarities were drawn between the Jewish and Chinese communities by the Europeans when they first entered Southeast Asia. As early as 1621, a British traveller to Southeast Asia, Sir Thomas Herbert, described Chinese merchants as 'Jew like' people who made their money by 'gleaning here and there' to make a profit under very testing conditions (cited in Kotkin, 1992: 170). One of the more famous comparisons between the Jews and the Chinese can be found in a pamphlet published by the Siamese king, Rama IV, in 1914 where the latter brands the Chinese the 'Jews of the East' (Reid, 1997: 55). In the pamphlet, the king claimed the Chinese possessed the same characteristics as the Jews describing them as self-interested people with little loyalty whose singular purpose in life was the pursuit of wealth. These two examples indicate that beyond sharing negative racial stereotyping, other historical parallels may be drawn. Like the Jews, the Chinese had carved a niche for themselves by establishing themselves as traders, artisans and skilled workers in places where they were not natives (Kotkin, 1992: 171). Moreover, they had done so whilst remaining largely culturally distinct existing instead in separate communities from others and maintaining their own sub-economies (Kotkin, 1992: 172). These

early comparisons have led to the term diaspora being deployed to represent the experiences of those of Chinese ancestry and also as a point of analysis to examine those experiences.[1]

With reference to the Chinese episode, Chapter Four builds on the findings of the previous analysis and aims to illustrate three points: (1) diasporic identity is variable in the sense that it is able to manifest itself in various fashions and degrees; (2) these variable identities are dependent upon an equally variable conception of home; and (3) a uniquely transient diasporic identity is created within diasporic networks. By illustrating these three points, this chapter argues that, firstly, the term diaspora as understood here is applicable to the Chinese outside of China and, secondly, the term is an invaluable theoretical tool through which this transnational community (as well as other diasporic ones) may be understood. The application of this understanding of diaspora in analysing the Overseas Chinese over other nomenclature not only offers a useful lens through which one can interrogate the character of difference that is generated in the diasporic experience, but it also captures the flux of diasporic identification and the ephemeral nature of the shared diasporic moment. I argue here that diasporic identity is fleeting and it is most obvious when members of the different nodes of the diaspora share a common identity to work together for the achievement of common goals through diasporic networks.

Chapter Four is divided into three sections. The first section (Section 4.1) highlights the manner in which the three concepts of identity, home and host are dealt with in Timothy Mo's novel *Sour Sweet* (SS) and Amy Tan's novel *The Joy Luck Club* (JLC). The issues surrounding the three concepts raised in their work provide an analogical reference point for the more theoretically abstract

considerations of the chapter. The novels highlight two points: (1) the variable and strategic nature of identity; and (2) the fluctuating position of home in accordance with this 'situational identity'. Taking on board these points, the second section (Section 4.2) analyses and highlights the limitations of alternative approaches to diaspora used in understanding the Chinese overseas. It is shown here that while these approaches are helpful in understanding the Chinese diaspora, they are unable to capture the experience fully due the two points raised by the previous section. That is, Chinese diasporic identity is variable and those of the Chinese diaspora do not necessarily have a shared and static understanding of home. In the final section of the chapter (Section 4.3), the applicability of the term *diaspora* as understood in this thesis is argued for. This part of the chapter not only addresses traditional concerns regarding the use of the term but it also illustrates its advantages over the alternative approaches discussed in understanding the overseas Chinese community.

4.1 Representing Diaspora: The Overseas Chinese of the Novel

In this first section, the manners in which the three concepts of identity, host and home are understood and managed within overseas Chinese works of fiction are used as analogical reference points for the theoretical concerns of the later sections. By looking at Timothy Mo's novel *Sour Sweet* and Amy Tan's novel *Joy Luck Club*, these three terms – identity, host and home – will be explored to reveal the following: (1) identity is strategic and reflexive as it is in constant flux dependent upon the situation at hand; and, (2) home and host have no fixed location as they may shift from one locale to another dependent upon the identity that is articulated at any one time.

It is hoped that the employment of the novels will act as easy to follow analogies for which the more abstract theoretical discussions are provided grounding.[2] Importantly, the ideas put forward in the novels under examination should not be written off as mere works of fiction. Instead, they offer valuable insight into the fluctuating nature of Chinese diasporic identity as well as the various imaginings of home displayed by ethnic Chinese outside of China in their day-to-day lives. They offer, in sum, new insight into a scholarly debate that has for the most part tended to be historical in scope (Lee, 1998: 122).

4.1.1 *Timothy Mo's Sour Sweet*

Timothy Mo's *Sour Sweet* is a story about the life of the Chinese Chen family in London during the 1960's. The main characters of the novel are Mr. Chen, his wife Lily, sister-in-law Mui, and son Man Kee. The reader is allowed to follow almost every waking moment of the Chen's as they struggle to survive initially on Chen's meagre wages as a strike breaker, then as a dutiful employee in a Soho Chinese restaurant and, finally, as the family goes into business on their own by opening a Chinese take-away in South London.

The basic themes explored through the book are that of cultural collision and cultural adaptation. This is expressed rather obviously in the first paragraph of the book as '[t]he Chens had been living in the UK for four years, which was long enough for them to have lost their place in the society from which they had emigrated but not long enough to feel comfortable in the new' (SS, Pg. 1). The novel allows the reader to view the various identificational strategies adopted by individual family members as they become increasingly enmeshed with British society and are

forced to come to terms with tax returns, car ownership and school. The novel observes Mr. Chen to be 'an interloper' where even though he 'felt at home and not yet at home', he did at the end of the day feel 'more comfortable rootless' (SS, Pg. 135). Juxtaposed against the character of Mr Chen is Lily, Mr Chen's wife. She is portrayed as the unapologetic Chinese character of the family. Despite being an emigrant to a new country, she ironically refers to her White customers as *Gwai Lo* and *Gwai Faan,* derogatory terms in Cantonese meaning foreign devil and foreign person respectively. Lily is ambitious and hardworking but firmly knows what the hard work is eventually in aid of. When looking at a boat on a day at the beach, she remarks to her son that 'it is the ship that will take us all back home when we are finished here' (SS, Pg. 154).

Besides their identificational negotiations, the concept of home and the part played by it in shaping an individual's identity is explored. Home for Lily is China, an imagined China where the children were filial and respected their elders and where the people were polite whilst Mr. Chen's conception of home is much more ambivalent. The combination of the two characters of husband and wife is interesting, as one would assume that it is Mr. Chen who would have a more compelling reason to have a romanticised notion of China. It was he who still had family relations there whilst Lily had no living relative beyond the sister who was with her in London. It could be argued that Lily's notion of China and her view of Britain as a stopover before the return home was very much influenced by her desire to live up to her understanding of her Chinese-ness – a Chinese-ness based on filial piety. For her, China represents a place where she would be recognised as the filial daughter-in-law and where her son could be a proper Chinese son, uncorrupted by a western education where 'there was little discipline' and where the children decided

what they were going to learn (SS, Pg. 229). Unlike Lily, by having a 'looser' conception of his Chinese-ness and being more comfortable rootless, Mr Chen's attitude towards China is permitted to be correspondingly vacillating.

Besides the clear strategies of husband and wife in relation to their living in Britain, Mo offers two characters whose positions are less clear-cut than Chen's ambivalence and Lily's overly-romanticised notions of Chinese-ness and China. Between their polemical positions, one of existentialist nihilism and the other based on the glorification of tradition, lie the position of Mui and Man Kee. It is through their characters that the idea of identity as a site of constant negotiation and adaptation is driven to the fore. Mui, Lily's sister, does the unthinkable by getting pregnant out of wedlock, a situation Lily previously observed as something that frequently happened to Western women (SS, Pg. 136). It is Mui who makes an effort to learn to speak English and who finally moves out of the house in order to start her own *Chinese* English fish and chip store. As for Man Kee, he is forced to attend both an English and Chinese school. Lily was of the view that a Chinese school was necessary to counteract the strange things Man Kee was learning in his English one. At the end of the novel, the triads murder Chen and Lily is left with only her son. Lily takes solace in the fact that no one could take Man Kee away from her but the reader is forced to wonder if Man Kee would develop into a person very much like the food that they served at the take-away, 'food that bore no resemblance at all to Chinese cuisine' (SS, Pg. 105).

What can be drawn from Mo's portrayal of the four characters is that home and identity in the diasporic experience are vague concepts that can morph to adapt to particular circumstances. The Chens maintain a juggling act between where they are from and where they are at, creating a 'China' and Chinese-ness for particular

situations. This balancing act has been described as 'situational ethnicities' where the identities of 'host' and 'home' are presented as strategically dependent upon 'the demands of the moment and the types of audience available' (Ma, 1998: 3). The situation is well expressed in the novel when the Chens enter a hall of mirrors at an amusement arcade. Being the seemingly immutable traditional Chinese character, Lily is alarmed when the mirrors portray the family in what may be assumed to be their 'real' state, 'a family of compressed dwarfs and elongated giants, repeated into infinity in a series of diminishing, mutually reproducing images' (SS, Pg. 156). Thus, the concept of home and the Chinese-ness they carry with them will reconfigure into 'a series of.... mutually reproducing images'. In the end of the novel, even Lily becomes more comfortable with the situation. With Chen murdered, Mui out of the house and Man Kee spending more time in school, Lily realises they can never return to the close knit family they once were but notes that

> There had been parturition, the single cell had contracted, swelled and through the wall had escaped matter from its very nucleus. Now there were two cells, sharing the same territory, happily co-existing but *quite* autonomous (SS, Pg. 275, emphasis added).

Thus, even Lily, the most traditional of the Chens, is forced to realise that there is a spectrum of Chinese-ness and many locations of China. Though they had all originated from the same 'single cell', they had broken off to form their own individual understandings of themselves and had developed their own relationship with their history and traditions. Despite this separation, they remain recognisable to each other as they share the same identificational terrain, one built squarely on the foundations of Chinese-ness. This should not be read as a belief in an unchanging

Chinese essence. Even though on occasion what is shared may coincide – 'happily co-existing but quite autonomous' – the identificational territory that they share is the common starting point of aligning their identities under a wide gamut of Chinese-ness. Within this Chinese-ness, there is a perpetual tension between 'where you are from' and 'where you are at' amongst the characters in the novel; creating a culture that neither privileges home nor host.

4.1.2 *Amy Tan's Joy Luck Club*

The *Joy Luck Club* chronicles the lives of eight ethnic Chinese women in the United States as they negotiate between past and present, present and future. The main characters are the four immigrant mothers Suyuan Woo, An-mei Hsu, Lindo Jong and Ying-ying St. Clair and their four daughters Jing-mei 'June' Woo, Rose Hsu Jordon, Waverly Jong and Lena St. Clair. Similar to Mo's *Sour Sweet,* and structured as a series of personal narratives by each of the characters, two of the main themes the novel attempts to elucidate are cultural collision and cultural adaptation. The mothers in the novel struggle with the past and this struggle has a knock-on effect on their daughters who have to come to terms with their mother's past and their own present.

Unlike Mo's diverse portrayal of the varying conceptions of Chinese-ness and home through his characters, Tan's mothers seem to share a common vision of both. Through the mothers, China is painted to be the site of unresolved trauma and personal anguish as well as a place that is beautiful and colourful (JLC, Pg. 19-83). The lives of the mothers are the consequences of difficult childhoods, war, poverty, starvation, and – in the case of Ying-ying St. Clair who stands apart by having had a

privileged upbringing – a single traumatic childhood experience. It is this personal baggage the mothers take with them and are forced to work with when they try to start their life anew in the United States. Stubbornly clinging on to their past whilst they attempt to adapt to American culture, the mothers remain suspended between two worlds and two cultures. They believe they have attained the best of both worlds and cultures and hope to pass on these gifts to their children. Lindo Jong sums up their position by maintaining that she desired for her children 'to have the best combination: American circumstances and Chinese character' but she also laments her failure to realise 'these two things do not mix' (JLC, Pg. 254). Coupled with the identificational balancing act that they conduct in America, the mothers are also aware they can never return home to the China of their memory and imagination. Both An-mei Hsu and Lindo Jong were not treated as natives on their trips to China, noting that the Mainland Chinese knew that they 'were not one hundred percent Chinese' (JLC, Pg. 36 and 266). Their state of flux is confusing as Lindo Jong is left to wonder 'what did I lose? What did I get back in return?' (JLC, Pg. 266).

Tan's daughters play a similar role in her novel as Man Kee in Mo's *Sour Sweet*. They have had no firsthand experience of China but have since childhood had been continually bombarded by the stories told by their mothers. As such, they too end up in a position not too dissimilar from their mothers. They long for an Americanisation they can neither define nor describe and remain unfulfilled as adults due to the conceptions of Chinese-ness impressed upon them. Lena St. Clair could be taken as speaking for all of the daughters when she notes that she is '"exotic" in an unusual way' (JLC, Pg. 156). In a way, their position is arguably more difficult than their mothers. Not only is the Chinese-ness they possess a confusing bundle of lived experiences and stories but the spectre of home that looms

large over them is not one in the shape of an experienced China but one that is in their heads. For them, China is an 'intangible geography of narratives' that takes the form of their mother's expectations in addition to the Chinatown that they grew up in (Huntley, 1998: 54). Their position encapsulates the idea of 'situational ethnicities' highlighted above – referred to as a strategic or reflexive identity in the previous chapters – as they can emphasise or de-emphasise the cultural traits that they carry dependent upon the situation. This situational ethnicity is not an either/or choice between Chinese-ness and American-ness but is a choice between degrees of expression between the two unstable positions. For example, although, as noted by Jing-Mei Woo, 'in a crowd of Caucasians, two Chinese people are already like family' (JLC, Pg. 198), they fluctuate in their identification with their Chinese-ness since her Caucasian friends in university agreed she was as unlikely to be Chinese as they were (JLC, Pg. 267). This ability to switch identifications finds expression in the manner the daughters of the novel for a time preferred to be known by their American names but have now accepted their Chinese ones as 'it's even becoming fashionable for American-born Chinese to use their Chinese names' (JLC, Pg. 37).

Tan, in the same way that Mo uses food and mirrors as a literary device to capture the open-endedness and complexity of the identificational issues at hand, may be seen to use clothes to the same effect. When Suyuan Woo arrives in the United States with only one trunk of fancy silk dresses that are inappropriate for her new life, she is forced to resort to wearing second-hand Western dresses that are too large for her (JLC, Pg. 20). In a photograph of Ying-ying St. Clair when she was released from Angel Island Immigration Station, Ying-ying is captured wearing an ill fitting westernised jacket over and ankle length Chinese dress (JLC, Pg. 105). Her daughter Lena notes that in the outfit 'she looks as if she were neither coming from

nor going to someplace' (JLC, Pg. 105). Tan does possess an optimism about this balancing act performed by both mothers and daughters, At the end of the novel, having returned to China to meet her long lost half-sisters, Jing-Mei Woo comes to the understanding that

> And now I also see what part of me is Chinese. It is so obvious. It is my family. It is in our blood. After all these years, it can finally be let go (JLC, Pg. 288).

The idea of Chinese-ness and China understood here is one of a constant balancing act between the stories and traditions past on by each family and their situations in America. For Jing-Mei Woo, 'it can finally be let go' could be interpreted in two ways. At its first reading, one's immediate interpretation of the statement may be that 'it' may finally be dropped and gotten rid of. Chinese-ness is something that may be abandoned without much difficulty. However, another possible reading of the statement may hold that what is being 'let go' of is the constant inner struggle to choose between cultures. Both can reside together without being in competition as they are not an either/or choice.

4.2 Contemporary Conceptualisations of the Chinese Overseas

Through the discussion of the two novels and the lives of the main characters, it was revealed in the previous section that diasporic Chinese identity is variable in the sense that an individual's identity is alterable. In addition, a necessary component of this variable identity is a respectively variable conception of a real or imagined home. Despite possessing varying understandings of Chinese-ness and China, as

demonstrated in both novels, all the characters were able to identify with each other and continued to interact with each other as diasporic Chinese. Even the most traditional characters such as Lily in *Sour Sweet* came to understand that Chinese-ness is a spectrum of identities capable of coexisting harmoniously (SS, Pg. 275), and, like the mothers of the *Joy Luck Club*, accepted that both the struggle to identify one true form of Chinese-ness and the attempt to make a choice between two cultures should 'finally be let go' (JLC, Pg. 288).

This section proceeds to discuss three contemporary approaches to understanding and conceptualising the Chinese overseas in greater detail. The three approaches under investigation here focus on the following aspects and their relationship to understanding Chinese identity. They are: (1) portrayals in the media and popular press; (2) emphasis on historical myths and language'; and (3) the triangular relationship of host, home and Chinese overseas. I argue that although these contemporary approaches under investigation raise several important points, they fail to construct a theoretical model that is able to fully capture the overseas Chinese experience. For such a conceptualisation to be adequate, the identificational complexities brought to light in the two novels discussed above have to be overcome. In illustration, when discussing the characters of the novels such as the Chens in *Sour Sweet*, should they be discussed as Anglo-Chinese, British-Chinese, Chinese-British, Chinese, English or British? Choosing one term over the others privileges a particular identity over the others on offer. If they are to be understood as Anglo-Chinese, this immediately shows partiality towards an English and Chinese element of their identity that cuts off or pushes to the side all other possibilities. A similar problem is faced when the characters in *The Joy Luck Club* are discussed. If one was to attempt to understand all the characters *en masse*, should the characters

be grouped as American-Chinese, Chinese-American, American-Asian, Californian-Chinese, Chinese, Californian or American for example? In addition, how should the experiences of the Chens *and* the characters of *The Joy Luck Club* be understood together? Their similar yet different experiences refuse to be pigeonholed as none of the classifications do justice to their combined experiences and identifications.

To provide some introductory background, the dispersion of the Chinese people beyond the borders of China has had a long history and has resulted in a diverse spread of Chinese all over the world. In fact, its origins may be traced to the first millennium AD.[3] Today, Chinese communities have moved beyond the Pacific Rim with communities in Europe and Latin America. Besides their extensive dispersal, Chinese communities have long attracted attention due to their economic success. In 1991, the World Bank estimated that the combined output of the overseas Chinese was nearly $400 billion (Weidenbaum and Hughes, 1996: 25). A more recent estimate increases the figure by a third, placing it at $600 billion (Brauchli and Biers, *Wall Street Journal*, 19/04/95). To give a few examples on how influential Chinese communities outside of China are, in Indonesia the Chinese represent only 3-4 percent of total population but own 70 percent of private domestic capital; in Thailand, four of the largest banks are owned by the Chinese who form only 10 percent of the population; in the Philippines, while totalling only 2 percent of the population, one-third of the largest 1000 corporations are Chinese owned (Weidenbaum and Hughes, 1996: 25).

In reference to the concerns of this thesis, due to their historical as well as contemporary global dispersion and their economic influence, there are as many competing conceptualisations of the Chinese overseas as there are ways to group these studies into genres[4]. It is held here that there are three major modes of analysis

in the conceptualisation of the Chinese overseas as a transnational collective which will be discussed in the following sections. The first, and perhaps most familiar, is the representation of the Chinese overseas to be found in the media and in popular texts and that is subject to the investigation of Section 4.2.1. Seeking to explain the economic success of particular communities of Chinese overseas, these representations invoke essentialised Orientalist Chinese traits such as family values, *guanxi* networks and other supposed timeless and intrinsic features of Chinese culture. Overlapping with the first approach, the second manner in which the Chinese overseas have been conceptualised, and which is discussed in Section 4.2.2, focuses on the tools through which Chinese-ness in transmitted (Watson, 1991, Pan, 1991). For such approaches, the tie that binds all Chinese outside of China has been identified as a sociological and anthropological category where Chinese historical roots, historical myths of descent and language are used to identify and understand them as a distinct ethnic or cultural group. Finally, the third and more nuanced understanding of the Chinese overseas is represented in analyses that focus on the triangular relationship between host, home and migrant in shaping a particular type of Chinese transnational identity (Esman, 1986, Wang, 1991). These forms of analyses place emphasis on the manner in which the triangular relationship of the migrant's occupation, the treatment received from the host country and the influence of the internal and external politics of China have on identification with Chinese-ness. In addition, agency is acknowledged in this third approach as migrants are considered autonomous agents who may choose how to react to the influences of the triangular relationship. Section 4.2.3 will critically engage with this third approach to overseas Chinese identity formation. Therefore, the purpose of this examination

of these three approaches is to highlight their flaws and to draw attention to their inability to provide a comprehensive picture of the Chinese diasporic experience.

4.2.1 *Approach 1: The Chinese Overseas of the Media and Popular Texts*

> Offshore China is an empire of fifty-five million people, intricately interlaced by systems of guilds, benevolent societies, tongs, triads, *kongsi* and name-and-place associations, which individually and together, supply the personal connections and financial linkages that make the Overseas Chinese such a potent force. *It is an empire without borders, national government or flag. It is deliberately opaque – an invisible empire of conglomerates* (Seagrave, 1995: 14, emphasis added).

> Spread among over a dozen countries around the Pacific, the overseas Chinese control an "empire" that is multinational by nature, essentially an archipelago of critical nodes ranging from centers throughout Southeast Asia to Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the coastal provinces of China as well as overseas outposts in such places as Canada, California, New York and the United Kingdom (Kotkin, 1992: 166).

The quotes above are two examples of the predominant understanding of the Chinese community outside of China as found in popular texts and in the media. In this understanding, the Chinese overseas are represented as closely tied to each other thanks to a shared ethnic and cultural identity. Moreover, they are perceived to possess no strong ties with and little loyalty to the states in which they reside. Much has been made of the supposed 'bamboo network' or 'chopstick capitalism' expressed, for example, in an article published by *The Economist* that forwards the view that 'China's diaspora turns homeward' (Economist, 27/11/97: 27-28). The perpetuation of this understanding of the Chinese overseas has been employed by

different actors to further political goals. Often cultivated and alluded to, for example, by opportunistic politicians in order to garner support from the masses, the employment of the term diaspora in reference to the Chinese overseas thus becomes a means to ensure that 'they' would never be one of 'us' (Wang, 1999: 2).This point is illustrated by the comments of a leading politician in Malaysia who was quoted in *The Economist* saying, '[p]ersonally I was happy when China did not get the Olympics. It would have caused a wave of Chinese chauvinism and they [ethnic Chinese Malaysians] would have poured all their money into China. The Chinese are an immigrant race, their loyalty is where the money is' (*Economist*, 27/11/93: 27).

Nonetheless, closer analysis of these statements reveals several glaring difficulties that are associated with this view of the Chinese diaspora. I argue that by painting the Chinese overseas as a homogenous unified entity, the following aspects of the Chinese diaspora have been ignored: (1) Chinese migrants have come from distinctly diverse areas with their own dialects, cultures and traditions; (2) this diversity has been made greater as Chinese migrants in their varied locales across the world fall into a whole range of socio-economic groups; and (3), the differing political environments of their varied locations have offered them a spectrum of identifications beyond that of a transnational Chinese-ness. Due to these overlooked yet important issues, it is unfortunate that such inadequate narratives continue to propagate.

To allow for further clarification, the three points will now be elaborated on. To reiterate, the first point holds that the Chinese do not form a homogeneous group. As such, although people from the three southeastern Chinese provinces of Guangdong, Fujian and Guangxi spearheaded initial Chinese migration going back to at least the third century AD, following migrations have originated from all over

China. These migrants speak different dialects, most of which are mutually unintelligible except in the written script. Moreover, as in any society, they comprise of individuals who possess different beliefs and values. Therefore, it is difficult for any conception of the Chinese overseas to ignore these differences in order to maintain an understanding that they are a 'nation without borders' connected to one another by blood. This basic grouping of the Chinese overseas is made even more unhelpful if one considers the second point as raised above, namely that they are composed of individuals from varied socio-economic backgrounds. It is hard to imagine that the individuals referred to in the *Economist* article cited above on the issue of the Chinese overseas such as billionaire Li Ka-Shing have anything in common with, for example, an exile from the Tiananmen protests of 1989 (*Economist*, 27/11/93: 27). In elaboration of the third point, through centuries of migration, most migrants have settled in the places they have arrived at and possess alternative identities with which to identify. I hold that the availability of alternative identities has opened up new possibilities of thinking and understanding themselves, thus making sweeping generalisations about their shared Chinese-ness questionable. For example, at a conference for Chinese entrepreneurs in Hong Kong, Singapore's former Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew expressed great doubts over the possibility of a transnational Chinese community with no loyalty to the places in which they reside (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, 14/07/94: 42). He said,

> [Although] [w]e are ethnic Chinese.... [t]he Thai-Chinese is a Thai, and in the end, he wants Thailand to prosper so that his assets in Thailand can grow and his children's future in Thailand can be secure. So too, Chinese-Singaporeans, Chinese-Indonesians, Chinese-Malaysians and Chinese-Filipinos.... [T]o think otherwise and believe that we have more in common with one another and the country of our ancestors than we do with our fellow

> citizens in our respective new homes is unrealistic. It will lead to grief when our interests do not coincide (cited in *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 14/07/94: 42).

Despite these internal divisions and multiple competing identities, the fact that Lee Kuan Yew was invited to address a conference specifically targeted at Chinese entrepreneurs indicates that there must be some form of Chinese-ness that the Chinese overseas are able to call upon in order to identify and interact with each other. Moreover, this variance has led observers to hold that the internal divisions within the Chinese diaspora should be regarded as a positive feature for 'the strength of the community lies not in their internal stability but in their internal dynamism, mutability and transiency' (Christiansen, 1998: 52). Thus, to understand the Chinese overseas as a community, one requires a theory that is sensitive enough to cope with this heterogeneity. Furthermore, if this common identity is situational and variable with no real closure, such a theory will have to be correspondingly flexible. In reference to the novels discussed, such a theory will have to accommodate the complex lives of individuals such as the daughters in *The Joy Luck Club* who seem to be torn between their American-ness and their Chinese-ness.

It is important to stress at this point that the experiences of the daughters of the novel are by no means unique. Another example for the need for flexibility are the Peranakans of Southeast Asia who are the descendents of Chinese migrants who have established communities in the region since the 1800s. Over time, this group of people incorporated indigenous Malay customs and language into their own to develop a category of creole Malay speaking Chinese. As such, depending upon the social context, the Peranakans are able to emphasise or de-emphasise their Chinese, Malay or Peranakan traits – thus illustrating the point how identity as discussed in

this thesis is variable, strategic and situational. In Dutch colonial Indonesia, the Peranakans remained recognisably Chinese as it earned them a key economic place in the eyes of the colonial power (Wang, 1994: 129). In contrast, in modern day Malaysia, despite their long history of settlement in the country, the Malaysian government refuses to acknowledge them as natives or *bumiputras* (sons of the soil), thus denying them the opportunity to enjoy the affirmative action programs offered to the Malays in Malaysia. As a result, denied the opportunity to be classified as ethnically Malay, many Peranakans have been forced by their 'hosts' to seek assimilation back into the non-Peranakan population by becoming re-sinicized and relearning the Chinese language and culture (Tan: 1983: 56-78). From the experience of the Peranakans, it can be seen that although there may be a Chinese-ness that can be called upon, framing the Chinese overseas experience within the binary terms of Us/Them, Majority/Minority, Migrant/Native does not do justice to the heterogeneous nature of the diasporic experience.

4.2.2 *Approach 2: The Historical Roots, Myths and Language of Chinese Identity*

Often used in support of those visions of the Chinese overseas displayed in the first approach, the second form of analysis under discussion here studies the bonds employed by Chinese people to construct a distinction between themselves and other ethnic groups. Studies of this kind appear to foster the belief that all Chinese share a biological line traceable to, as legend would have it, the Yellow Emperor. This ethnic identification, mythologized through the idea of the 'dragon seed', evokes strong sentiments of linkage to the same progenitor. This myth of a common

biological line is so strong that a recent book by Pan (1990) on the diaspora of the Chinese is titled *Sons of the Yellow Emperor*. Other studies have looked at the manner in which Chinese identity has been transmitted successfully through the ideographic nature of the Chinese language (Watson, 1991). According to the argument, an ideographic script has allowed Chinese from disparate regions to share a common philosophical and literary tradition. Coupled with the autocratic nature of the Chinese state (both pre- and post republic), with its complex bureaucracy that permeated all levels of society, this has been considered a strong tool by which a diverse group of people may become attuned to believing they share a common identity.

Nonetheless, I argue that these forms of analyses remain inadequate in their attempts to understand the Chinese overseas for one significant reason. Though these forms of analyses are invaluable in identifying the tools through which various forms of Chinese-ness are transmitted and promoted, they are unable to provide the reasons that cause individuals to identify with this Chinese-ness or with the greater Chinese community in the first place. For example, a Chinese literate individual from Los Angeles may not identify as much with Chinese-ness and his fellow Chinese as a non-Chinese speaking individual from Singapore. Culture, especially the language component, serves to portray a particular type of identity, and different degrees of acculturation in different areas gives rise to differing perceptions and levels of Chinese identity (Tan, 1998: 41). To return to the earlier example of the Peranakans, despite speaking creole Malay, they were proud of their local identity and even looked down on the *sinkheh* (new Chinese immigrants) during the Dutch colonial period in Indonesia. This was despite the fact that the *sinkheh* despised the Peranakans for not speaking Chinese (Tan: 1998: 30). The significance of this

example is that the Peranakans remained proud of their Chinese heritage despite the loss of the ability to use the Chinese language. As such, although language is one of the tools by which one can identify with Chinese-ness, it is neither the only tool nor is it an assured tool for identification. By identifying the tools used in transmitting and developing Chinese-ness, studies that focus on this aspect are unable to explain the tension between the *sinkheh* and their Peranakan brethren.

To remain with the example, to understand the Peranakans there may be a temptation to use terms such as 'hybridity' or 'in-betweeness' for their description. By using such terms, the Peranakans become framed as hybrids that challenge the idea of pure Chinese and Malay identities. However, the use of hybridity is not without difficulties as the term implies an impure identity located somewhere between two stable and pure identities (McKeown, 1999: 310). Therefore, the term may unwittingly give credence to the essentialist position on identity. If the Peranakans are considered hybrids, there already is a tacit understanding that they lie in-between pure and stable identities. For example, if the character of Man Kee from *Sour Sweet* was to be discussed as an archetypical example of hybridity, one is forced to contend with discussing the question what exactly he is a hybrid of? As such, one is then faced with the difficult task of not only coming to a decision on the identities that constitute his identity but also has to contend with discussing how such identities are pure and stable. Using the example of the Peranakans once again, these two problems become clear from an interview with a Peranakan describing his identity.

> Here's a Peranakan family, Western-educated.... All adopt all the bad Western... customs, with a mixture of Malay curry {laughs}, and this is what it's about, undefinable. There's no boundary line to draw to say that this is

> what it represents .... So that of course makes your research a bit difficult... You can't... select the sheep from the goat (cited in Rudolph, 1998: 25).

As has already been discussed in Chapter Two on the different conceptualisations of identity, the essentialist position leads to two major irresolvable problems. Firstly, there is the problem of identifying what this essence is, and secondly, there is the difficulty in explaining why and how such an identity exists. For the first problem, it is doubtful if one can find an absolute distinction between what is essentially white, black, yellow or brown. The second problem with this understanding of identity is its overemphasis on roots and the desire to reduce difference to simple binary opposites. While it draws clear frontiers of us/them it lacks the explanatory power to identify why and how 'us' and 'them' come about. Additionally, this reading of identity is also unable to explain how 'us' and 'them' can undergo change. As discussed by Edward Said, the 'Other' is amongst 'us', blurring boundaries, shifting lines of identification, forcing unsettling questions on who 'we' are – 'we' may at times be 'them' at other times not:

> [n]o one today is purely one thing. Labels like Indian, or woman, or Muslim, or American are no more than starting points, which if followed into actual experience are quickly left behind.... No one can deny the persisting continuities of long traditions, sustained habitations, national languages, and cultural geographies, but there seems no reason except fear and prejudice to keep insisting on their separation and distinctiveness (Said, 1994: 407-403).

Therefore, any theory on the Chinese overseas has to take into consideration these blurred identificational boundaries without essentialising it into a position between

two stable opposites whilst being flexible enough to accommodate their shifting subjects.

4.2.3 *Approach 3: The Triangular Relationship of Host, Home and Chinese Overseas in Identity Formation*

Besides the two approaches to understanding the Chinese overseas that have been examined above, the third approach to be discussed here is more sensitive to their heterogeneous complexion and internal division. This mode of analysis allows for the examination of the triangular relationship between Chinese migrant, host and home in order to examine and explain the creation of both a Chinese identity as well as a Chinese community amongst those ethnic Chinese outside of China (Esman, 1986, Wang, 1991, Cohen, 1998). However, despite bringing greater sensitivity to the manner in which external (those outside one's community) and internal (those within one's community) factors coalesce to create an overseas Chinese identity, this third approach tends to overlook the interaction amongst the dispersed elements of the Chinese overseas in the creation of an overseas Chinese identity. In addition, there is a tendency to overemphasise the ability of individuals to define their own identity. As discussed previously, although a large part of identity formation involves self-articulation, this process is also delimited by both external and internal factors – one can only define oneself within the parameters given. Such limiting factors are for example, internal group dynamics and external state recognition. In the following I will adopt Wang Gungwu's chronological understanding of patterns of Chinese migration in his to understand the Chinese overseas (Wang, 1991).

Divided into occupational groups by the Chinese historian Wang Gungwu, Chinese migration may be split into the trader pattern (*huashang*) and the coolie pattern (*huagong*) (Wang, 1991). Wang also adds the sojourner pattern (*huaqiao*) to refer to ethnic Chinese migrants who engage with the politics of home and the promotion and maintenance of 'Chinese-ness' abroad. Finally, the most recent pattern of Chinese migration according to Wang is the descent or re-migrant pattern (*huayi*). Included in this pattern of migration are professionals that are mobile and open-minded comprising mainly of economically well-off ethnic Chinese. Their socio-economic situation offers two possible scenarios. On the one hand, there is the possibility that they will re-open links with China while one the other hand, they may jettison the need to identify with it.

In the following I will take a closer look as well as provide examples for those patterns of Chinese migration as identified by Wang. According to Wang, the **trader pattern** was the dominant form of migration by the eighteenth century and the only significant one before 1850 (Wang, 1991: 5-6). This pattern refers to the artisans and merchants who went abroad to set up bases at ports, mines or trading cities. If successful, the business would expand and acquire more agents either from the family or recruited amongst fellow Chinese. The more successful the business, the more likely it was for migrants to keep their Chinese characteristics and their connection with China. Where there was sufficient inducement to do so, many abandoned their 'Chinese-ness' and assimilated into local society.

The **coolie pattern**, on the contrary, refers to economically disadvantaged migrants who were involved in coolie labour – the word itself is derived from the Mandarin term *ku li* meaning harsh or difficult work. This particular pattern of migration is closely tied to the process of industrialisation and the subsequent rise in

demand for cheap unskilled labourers to build railroads and work on the plantations. This pattern was essentially transitional, with little interaction between migrant and locals. Most migrants returned to China once their contracts had expired. It was transitional also in the sense that this pattern of migration came to an end in the 1920s when such labour was no longer in such high demand (Wang, 1991: 6).

Unlike the trader and coolie pattern, the **sojourner pattern** no longer focuses on the occupations of the migrants. Instead, Chinese migrants are identified in an ideological, political and legal manner. This change in emphasis was caused by two reasons. Firstly, during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century China saw the need to recover some international standing *vis-à-vis* the Western powers and secondly, Chinese migrants abroad increasingly felt the desire to attain some respect from both their host and their home. According to Pransenjit Duara, before the onset of mainland China's nationalist activists, identity amongst the coolies and merchants coincides with Wang's coolie and trader pattern – the boundaries of identity were never fixed but were mobile and shifting (Duara, 1997: 39-58). As mentioned above, the business success of the Chinese trader and the gains to be had in his/her local environment influenced heavily on whom he/she identified with. The nationalist activists 'sought to transform these multiple, mobile identifications into a Chinese-ness that eliminated...internal boundaries, on the one hand, and hardened the boundaries between Chinese and non-Chinese, on the other' (Duara, 1997: 41). Thus, it was an attempt to close the Chinese ranks, between their varied selves and with the locals they were amongst. They now belonged under the national signifier *Huaqiao*, implying that they owed their allegiance to China. During that period, three competing narratives emanated from three different factions of modern nationalists in China. The Chinese court forwarded the first nationalist narrative.

Emissaries of the Chinese Emperor sought to attain the support of the Chinese migrants and their nationalist narrative was one that advocated the maintenance of the status quo in China. The Qing government (1644 – 1911) desperately required revenue and the migrants were viewed as a bountiful source. The courting of the Chinese migrants by the Imperial Chinese government signified a full reversal from previous policy that branded the migrants traitors for leaving the country and colluding with the Western barbarians (Duara, 1997: 42-43). Enticed by the possibility of attaining the social status orthodox Confucianism denied them throughout the centuries, many migrants were eager to buy (literally and figuratively) into this narrative of being tied to the imperial government and China. Titles bought allowed them to attain social stature within China as well as amongst their fellow Chinese migrants. The second nationalist narrative came from the reformists who appealed to an unchanging essence of Chinese-ness. Led by reformists such as Kang Youwei, they appealed to symbolism of the old whilst de-linking themselves from the failures of the past (Duara, 1997: 46-49). The Chinese migrants were painted to be Confucian heroes who played an integral part in China's expansion into Southeast Asia, subduing local 'barbarians' and establishing Chinese colonies. The revolutionaries offered the third and final nationalist narrative. Led by San Yat Sen, a return migrant to China who studied in Hawaii, the revolutionaries romanticised Chinese migrants as glorious colonisers who had become victimised by both the barbarian colonisers of China (the Manchus) and the Western colonialists in Asia. For the revolutionaries, true Chinese-ness lay with being part of the Han race. Therefore, all three competing narratives sought to garner support from the Chinese migrants by re-sinicising them with their own version of Chinese-ness. Additionally, many migrant Chinese were receptive to nationalist views as a correlation was

drawn between China's place in the international system and the treatment of Chinese migrants abroad. There was the widespread view that Chinese migrants faced discrimination abroad because China received no respect internationally (McKeown, 1999: 326).

Regardless of the narrative on offer, all three nationalist narratives sought to harden the soft boundaries of Chinese identities of the migrants in a move to anchor their identity to the fate of Mainland China. This competition for the loyalty of the Chinese migrants abroad later developed into one fought between the Chinese Communist Party and the Kuomintang after the early twentieth century. The courting by Mainland China of Chinese migrants officially ended in 1955 when Chou En Lai at the Bandung Afro-Asian Conference voiced China's desire to have 'peaceful co-existence ' with its neighbours. Ethnic Chinese abroad were told to choose once and for all what nationality they wanted (Esman, 1986: 135). Although China has in general abided by its decision, there have been occasional outbursts of concern on the manner in which ethnic Chinese have been treated in their adopted countries. This was seen most recently in China's vocalisation in 1998 of its unhappiness over the rapes and murders of the ethnic Chinese in Indonesia.

Wang's final migrant pattern is that of the Huayi or the **descent and re-migrant pattern.** Members of this relatively new pattern are identified as ethnic Chinese that originally migrated to a foreign country but have now move again and live in another (Wang, 1991: 8-12). For example, ethnic Chinese who match this pattern would be the re-migrants from Southeast Asia that have relocated to Australasia, the United States or Europe. Interest in this group stems from whether they will be assimilated into their host societies or whether they will maintain their Chinese-ness. In a survey of ethnic Chinese migration to the United States, L. Ling-

chi Wang has identified several possibilities for the identities adopted depending on the survival strategy chosen by the migrant. It is a shift away from the two traditional paradigms of *luoye guigen* and *loudi shengen* expressed by Wang Gungwu's re-migrant pattern (L. Wang, 1994: 187). The former holds that migrants are like falling leaves that will have to eventually return to their roots in Chinese soil, whilst the latter depicts the migrants as scattered seeds that take root where they are sown.

According to L. Ling-Chi Wang, instead of this traditional dichotomy, five types of Chinese identities are offered: the sojourner mentality, assimilation, accommodation, ethnic pride and alienation (Wang L, 1994: 188-189). The first two types of Chinese identities have been discussed above and need not be reiterated fully here. To summarise, the sojourner identity still holds China as its epicentre and migration is seen as a mere pause before the inevitable return to China. Assimilation lies on the other end of the spectrum, with the abandonment of Chinese-ness and an identification with the host country. The accommodation route is slightly different from that of the assimilationist one as it involves the embracement of 'host' lifestyles at least in public whilst still clinging on to what they consider a Chinese one in private. The fourth form of Chinese identity is one that takes pride in Chinese culture critically. Unlike a wholesale transplant of Chinese culture in the sojourner approach and the abandonment of Chinese culture in the assimilationist strategy, this identification with Chinese-ness sprouts from the acceptance of a uniquely Chinese experience in their new homes. It is this unique 'ethnic pride' experience that has led to the creation of a new community with shared interests and a common destiny. Finally, according to L. Ling-Chi Wang's survey, the alienation experience stems from the large number of students from the countries of Southeast Asia, Taiwan,

Hong Kong and China who have left home and never returned due to either the greater opportunities in America or an unreceptive political climate back home that makes return dangerous. They remain in the United States, opting to make the best of a difficult situation whilst they are unable to return. The makeup of their identity is a position that is similar to the sojourner, only differing in their inability to return. It must be noted that all five identities are not static as individuals may change their relationship and identification with the United States and China. For example, an individual may shift from considering him/herself a trapped alien to one that adopts an assimilationist identity. Alternatively, after experiencing tremendous discrimination, a person who may be considered possessing an accommodationist identity may then shift to identify with the sojourner pattern.

To conclude, although these forms of analyses by Wang Gungwu and L. Ling-Chi Wang provide an interesting insight into how the triangular relationship between Chinese overseas, host and home functions to shape an individual's identity, the part played by the interaction between ethnic Chinese from different areas in the creation of a transnational diasporic identity is conspicuously absent. Compelled by a desire not to refer to the Chinese outside of China as a diaspora due to the political overtones that are associated with the term (Wang, 1999: 1, Wang, 2000: 135), these approaches are eager to keep the analysis at a more localised level specific to individual areas and countries. For Wang Gungwu, the furthest that he is willing to go in his adoption of the term diaspora in reference to the ethnic Chinese abroad is to hold that 'there is no single Chinese diaspora but many different Chinese diasporas' (Wang, 1999: 17). As such, his focus is on the way in which home and host affect the decisions made by the migrant at his specific locale while

ignoring the way migrants from different locations interact with each other in the formulation of their identity.

In addition, there is a need here not to overemphasise the role of agency in theorising on the Chinese overseas. Identifying oneself with a particular identity may not necessarily ensure acceptance by other members of the group or alter the perception of non-group members. As illustrated in the *Joy Luck Club*, the characters An-mei Hsu and Lindo Jong, despite feeling totally Chinese, were not treated as natives when visiting China. Instead, they were aware that the Mainland Chinese knew they 'were not one hundred percent Chinese' (36 and 266). A non-fictional example of the majority stifling one's identificational space may be seen in the political and legal drama surrounding Taiwan born American scientist Lee Wen Ho. Lee was accused of stealing American nuclear secrets for the Chinese government. The accusations led to a protracted legal battle that resulted in the case being thrown out of court with key prosecution witnesses admitting that they had provided false and misleading testimony. According to the *Los Angeles Times*, the increased security at national defence facilities after the incident made the ethnic Chinese scientists working there feel like criminals, resulting in many leaving their jobs (Los Angeles Times, 25/09/00). Reporting on the reactions of ethnic Chinese Americans to the Lee incident, the views expressed by the interviewees were of disgust and fear that they will be treated as perpetual foreigners regardless of how 'American' they felt. In a separate incident, Asian Americans felt offended when their political contributions came under immediate suspicion following allegations that overseas Chinese had tried to buy political influence over President Bill Clinton in the 1996 US presidential election (AsiaWeek, 19/11/99). Businessmen complained about the embarrassment of being asked to give testimony over perfectly

legal donations. What these incidents clearly show is that the role of agency should not be overplayed when discussing identity formation. One's self-articulated identity may carry little weight in the way one is perceived and treated. Consequently, as identity is a two-way street of articulation and belief, any conceptualisation of the Chinese overseas should not assume that an individual is able to easily opt in or out of his/her community at a whim.

4.3 Understanding the Chinese Diaspora – from Diaspora to Diasporic

> It is not down in any map; true places never are (Melville, 1997: 52)

Besides the variable nature of diasporic Chinese identity, the deficiencies of the three traditional approaches discussed have revealed that a satisfactory approach will also have to take into account the following. (1) The diverse character of the Chinese overseas, (2) the reasons for an identification with Chinese-ness over other competing identities, (3) the manner in which different nodes interact of the Chinese overseas interact to create a diasporic Chinese identity, and (4), the identificational boundaries within which individuals are permitted to articulate their identity.

In order to address the concerns raised in constructing an adequate understanding of the Chinese overseas, this section argues the case for a diasporic approach. Besides addressing traditional concerns regarding the use of the term diaspora (See Chapter 3), I will also illustrate its advantages over alternative approaches to understanding the overseas Chinese community as previously discussed. Such an approach seeks to be as fluid as the subject studied as well as cognisant of the 'transnational political, economic, and cultural forces that traverse and constitute local, national and regional worlds' (Clifford, 1992: 102). In the same

manner as the diasporic experience is constantly unfolding and developing, a diasporic representation of the subject also has to reflect this fluidity – the approach does not ask 'where are you from?' or 'where are you at?' but 'where are you between?'. What develops from such an approach is not a final text on, for example, the diasporic Chinese in the United States. Instead, the understanding arrived at is one where the reader is sent away without closure and is forced to 'wander and wonder about the places where identities and memories meet to struggle and negotiate' (Boyarin, 1996: 25).

Constructing a diasporic understanding of the Chinese overseas would allow for a more adequate representation of the experience of individuals such as, Mei Quong Tart, a Chinese immigrant living in Australia (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 12/09/98). His experience is a constructive illustration of how both the issues raised in the novels as well as the failings of the three traditional approaches to understanding the Chinese overseas reflect real life. Quong Tart's experience, though slightly more complicated, is comparable to that of Mr. Chen and Lily as well as the mothers in the *Joy Luck Club*. Quong Tart was born in southern China in 1840 and moved to Australia when he was nine. He first worked in the goldmines but later moved to Sydney where he worked as a tea merchant, opening a number of tearooms. In 1886, he married an Englishwoman and developed a passion for Robert Burns, wearing kilts and playing the bagpipes. Successful in his business, he employed European staff and made large donations to Australian society. Nonetheless, Quong Tart did not abandon his connections with China. Instead, he campaigned for better working conditions for Chinese coolies and was vocal against the opium trade. He acted as an unofficial Australian ambassador on trips to China and was made a Mandarin by the Chinese Emperor. If we were to employ the three

traditional understandings of the Chinese overseas, it is difficult to see how Quong Tart's experience can be represented adequately. Similar to the characters in the novels, should Quong Tart be studied as – just to name a few possible permutations – a Chinese Australian, an Australian Chinese, a capitalist Chinese or an Australian capitalist? Quong Tart experience, like that of many others in the Chinese diaspora, refuses to be pigeonholed as it resists being tied to a specific locale and simultaneously is *and* is not of the local culture. However, if Quong Tart was to be represented as a diasporic Chinese, these different permutations would not be held to be mutually exclusive. Instead, they are all permutations of Quong Tart's variable diasporic Chinese identity.

Taking into account the difficulties in theorising about the Chinese overseas, Adam McKeown's (1999) insights into diasporic networks are a good starting point for the construction of a diasporic approach to understanding the Chinese diaspora. McKeown suggests that the term diaspora when applied to the Chinese overseas should be used as an adjective rather than a noun. This would avoid the afore mentioned problems as it does not connote a coherent concrete unit of geographically dispersed people bound by the same sentiment, culture and history that is threatening to host governments as well as ethnic Chinese around the globe. As expressed by McKeown

> [w]hen used in a more adjectival sense, the idea of diaspora can move away from identifying a bounded group, and instead focus on geographically dispersed connections, institutions, and discourses that cannot be readily accounted for from purely local or national frameworks... [this] entails an acknowledgement that a diasporic perspective can provide a needed supplement to nation-based histories, while simultaneously agreeing that the

> historical production of diasporas need to be interrogated (McKeown, 1999: 311-312)

In a nutshell, this would require a shift from viewing the ethnic Chinese outside of China as part of the singular unit of the 'Chinese diaspora' but instead focus on the 'diasporic Chinese' experience. Such a move would offer theoretical clarity and practical benefits. At a theoretical level, using the term diaspora as an adjective avoids the clumsiness of the term as a noun. The traditional idea of migration is often associated with dichotomies like push and pull, metaphors of uprooting and transplantation, and processes like settlement and assimilation. However, such outlooks only offer half the possible picture as migration is merely seem to be monodirectional and fails to capture what is described as diasporic. Moreover, even if return migration is recognised and added into the equation, the focus is merely on the reasons for return. The story of the migrant ends with his/her return to the land of origin. Instead, the term diaspora recognises that migrant identification need not be viewed as a zero-sum game, a choice between one or another identity. It is a position that recognises that particular identifications ebb and flow, refusing to be pinned down. It must be noted that what is not implied here is that 'we are all travellers now'. People still have homes and histories and they still identify with others, places and things. Although identity is an arbitrary articulation and the 'moment' is a fantasy conjured within uninterrupted time, this does not mean that dwelling and feelings of belonging ceases, as what a person once was informs what he/she can become. The tools by which identity is constructed and the method that allows the identity to be recognised is history – people have histories that they carry along with them while they are on the move. What is meant by history here is a collective memory about events and a set of practises and dispositions that although not shared

in its entirety by all members of a group is still recognisable enough for identification with each other. It is the above that allows an ethnic Chinese person to consider himself/herself a Chinese person at any moment in time and it is this that allows him/her to travel across the globe to be recognised by others that consider themselves at a particular moment in time to be Chinese.

As discussed in Chapter Two, identity has no cut-off point as every cut-off is 'strategic' and arbitrary and thus its articulation is an attempt at what Stuart Hall terms 'strategic essentialism' (Hall, 1997: 35). Meaning continues to unfold beyond the arbitrary closure that makes it possible at any moment. Therefore, difference persists in and alongside continuity. Identities originate from somewhere and have histories but like everything else that is historical, they undergo constant transformation. Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialist past, they are subject to the continuous interplay of history, culture and power (Hall, 1990: 225). One's history may represent the blocks through which identity can be constructed but there is no template for how those blocks are placed together at any given time. Such a view limits how much stock one can place on 'the moment' in the understanding of identity. The actions of a subject should not be interpreted as a defining moment of his/her identity anchored to a specific interpretation of his/her history but represent merely a 'strategic' articulation constructed from the historical tools in hand brought about and permitted by a particular moment and situation in time. For example, Chinese ethnocentrism is just one tactic in response to particular conditions faced; it is not a defining characteristic of ethnic Chinese people nor is it the only story that can be told by them about themselves.

The manner in which the fluctuating identity is facilitated is through the role played by diasporic transnational networks. In the words of McKeown, 'networks

are transnational institutions, organisations, and personal connections that made migration into a viable economic strategy and stable system for the circulation of goods, people, information and profit' (McKeown, 1999: 317). Diasporic transnational networks facilitate communities whose perceived territory exist within their own links and flows – existing parasitically upon but also outside the fixed boundaries and narratives of the nation-state. They are parasitical in the sense that they require nation-states in order to exploit the differences between them, but are outside the nation-state as the narrative of nationalism with it desire to anchor identity to a specific country fails to capture their experience. Furthermore, diasporic networks are set up specifically to move information, people, goods and profit between nation-states, thus calling into question the view that states have almost absolute control over what gets in and out of their borders. For example, Emmanuel Ma Mung cites the case of a Teochew Chinese from Cambodia who sought political asylum in France in the 1970s (Ma, 1998: 36). Having stayed there for a few years, he them migrated to Canada for several years. He returned to France in the late 1980s and started a restaurant and an import business using capital acquired in Canada and through loans from people of his own as well as another dialect group. The reason he cited for his return to France was the more promising business outlook on offer in France as opposed to Canada. What this example shows is that the Chinese diasporic experience is not characterised by migration from one point to another, but instead acknowledges that there is a constant circulation of migrants, allowing to-ing and fro-ing between various nodes. Furthermore, Ma's example is illustrative of the broadening and narrowing of identification with Chinese-ness to suit different situations. Ma's migrant (he does not disclose the migrant's name)

begins as a Teochew Cambodian Chinese but later expands his identification to include other Chinese of different dialect groups and geographical origin.

Through these networks, there is a perpetual tension between 'where you are from' and 'where you are at' thus creating a culture that neither privileges home nor host. Just as in any other community, these networks generate their own narratives to make sense of themselves and their experiences. As expressed by Salman Rushdie, '[I]t is normally supposed that something always gets lost in the translation; I cling, obstinately, to the notion that something can also be gained' (Rushdie, 1991: 17). Like Jing-Mei Woo of the *Joy Luck Club*, perhaps it is time for studies of the diasporic Chinese to move away from their visions of competition between identities and accept that this competition 'can finally be let go'. The identity that is constructed is not a hybrid between two supposedly pure and stable extremes but between two points that are constantly moving as well. Tentative steps towards constructing and understanding this diasporic identity narrative may be seen in the number of websites set up by individuals and organisations interested in understanding and promoting a diasporic identity. Sites such as the World Huaren Federation, the Chinese Alliance, Huayi and DimSum are dedicated to acting as conduits to ethnic Chinese outside of China.[5] Their goal is to encourage the fostering of a diasporic identity that straddles both home and host by using their historical/cultural tools to make sense of their current position.[6]

Furthermore, by using diaspora in an adjectival sense, there is an acknowledgement that not all people of a particular migrant ethnic group can be clumped together. It recognises that 'opting out' is a possibility that can be achieved through assimilation or returning home, thus giving some weight to agency. One can as easily opt into a specific diasporic experience if possessing the proper

cultural/historical tools. This point is especially important as it is only with this understanding that the variability of identity can be understood. Finally, by shifting our interest to a specifically diasporic experience allowed though diasporic networks, the historical baggage that comes with the term may be shed. In order to better grasp the 'opting out and opting in' phenomenon, it may be helpful to illustrate the point by the manner in which the World Huaren Federation (WHF) website was created. The website proclaims that

> [w]e are a group of individuals who are scattered throughout the world with one goal in common: a passion to promote kinship and understanding among all Overseas Chinese.... [a]n important goal of Huaren is to foster a spirit of cooperation among Overseas Chinese and friends who will voice our concerns towards the sorry plights of our kins [*sic*] in dire need for safety and basic human dignity....our interest is to promote inter-ethnic harmony through communication, understanding, and self-examination

More interestingly, the website's creation was a response to the rapes of 160 ethnic Chinese women in Indonesia in 1998 (*Straits Times*, 20/08/98). Its three founders were Joe Tan, an ethnic Chinese Malaysian that migrated to New Zealand 20 years ago; Daniel Tse, a ethnic Chinese Canadian who migrated from Hong Kong; and W. W. Looi, a ethnic Chinese Malaysian working in California (*Asian Wall Street Journal*, 23/07/98). All three met on internet chat rooms discussing the plight of the Indonesian Chinese and decided that something had to be done. In setting up the site, a Chinese American lawyer was used to register the WHF as a non-profit organisation. Of interest to this thesis, two points may be made. Firstly, it is interesting to note how ethnic Chinese from distant places can be brought together through their networks – in this particular instance, it was an electronic network – in

response to a particular incident. The second point to be made is that the reactions to their efforts are illustrative of the need to recognise that all ethnic Chinese outside of China do not naturally identify with their 'brethren'. They should not be viewed as a homogeneous and united entity. When they do come together to act in concert, they share a common diasporic moment that, though 'real', is fleeting and not static. Furthermore, not all Chinese overseas may share in that moment. Despite a good response to their 'Yellow Ribbon Campaign' to raise awareness on the situation, not all ethnic Chinese responded to their call. In the article from the *Asian Wall Street Journal*, some, though expressing sympathy, did not identify strongly enough to react. Nina, a Chinese Indonesian, was wary of playing up the Chinese identification, expressing her preference for those concerned to 'help Indonesia in general' (*Asian Wall Street Journal*, 23/07/98).

4.4 Concluding Remarks

The purpose of this first episode of diaspora has been to illustrate through the experience of Chinese diaspora the variability of diasporic identity, the correspondingly alterable conception of home necessary for such an identity, and the applicability of the term diaspora to capture the uniquely ephemeral diasporic identity created within diasporic networks. Through a discussion of two overseas Chinese novels, the chapter first illustrated how Chinese diasporic identity and its accompanying component of home is variable. In the second section of the chapter, building on the issues highlighted by the novels, three traditional approaches to understanding the Chinese diaspora were discussed. It was argued that all three are unable to fully represent the overseas Chinese experience. Finally, in the third

section of the chapter, a diasporic approach to representing the Chinese overseas was offered. This section has argued that by considering the Chinese overseas as diasporic rather than a unified and unchanging diaspora, it is possible to fully represent the manner in which diasporic Chinese identity is variable and membership to the greater diasporic community is oscillatory. Through such an approach, diasporic identity is acknowledged as fleeting and is most obvious when members of different nodes of the diaspora work together for common goals through diasporic networks.

With reference to the key concern of this thesis – that is, the complications Liberalism 1 and 2 as theories of multiculturalism may encounter in the management of difference – this section concludes with an evaluation of the impact the experience of the diasporic Chinese has on both (1) the diasporic experience, and (2) the difficulties faced by Liberalism 1 and 2 highlighted through the experience of diasporas.

(1) ***The diasporic experience*:** From the many examples of Chinese diasporic experiences discussed, such as those of the characters of the novels, the Peranakans of Southeast Asia, the experience of Chinese Americans and the life of Quong Tart, it is possible to appreciate the difficulty in arriving at comprehensive and inclusive a method through which their diverse yet similar experiences may be understood. As has been shown, diasporic Chinese-ness continually resists being pinned down to a single or collection of key identifiable features. As discussed (Chapter 4, Section 4.3 and Chapter 2, Section 2.2.1), diasporic identity has no cut-off point, instead every moment of its articulation is a subjectively imposed closure. In agreement with Avtar Brah, diasporic identity is complex 'matrix of economic, political and cultural

inter-relationships which construct a commonality between the various components of a dispersed group' (Brah, 1996: 196).

However, despite stressing the role played by individuals in articulating their own identity, the following two factors have been identified that may have a restrictive effect on an individual's ability to articulate his or her own identity. Firstly, the way in which individuals may articulate their identity is restricted by the role of history. History is understood here as a collective memory about events and a set of practises and dispositions that, while not being shared in its entirety by all members of a group, is nonetheless sufficiently recognisable to enable identification with each other. As identities have histories, like everything historical, they go through continuous renovation by being subject to the persistent 'play' of history, culture and power (Hall, 1990: 225). Secondly, individuals are also restricted in defining their identity by their external environment. For example, as demonstrated by the Peranakans, owing to the lack of recognition by the Malaysian government of their status as ethnic Malays and despite their long history in the country, many have been reawakened to their Chinese history and identity.

In order to represent this variable identity, it was argued that the term diaspora should be viewed as an adjective rather than solely as a noun. Viewed in such a manner, it is possible to appreciate the constantly unfolding diasporic experience. Such an understanding reduces the value of 'the moment' in understanding diasporas (See Chapter 3, Section 3.3). Furthermore, the actions of individuals should not be interpreted as the defining moment of their identity tied to an unambiguous version of history. Instead, identity is seen as a moment of 'strategic' articulation constructed with the historical tools at hand and permitted by a specific moment and situation in time. These diasporic moments where diasporic

identities are created, developed and lived are in their networks that connect their different nodes across the globe with each other. The most obvious of these networks may be seen in websites such as the World Huaren Federation, the Chinese Alliance, Huayi and DimSum. Through such sites, a diasporic identity is fostered to make sense of their current position that straddles both multiple homes and hosts by using their historical/cultural tools. Furthermore, the variability of identity and the ephemeral nature of the diasporic experience are driven to the fore in such websites. Demonstrated by the World Huaren Federation site that was created as a means to highlight the suffering of the Chinese in Indonesia, members came together for a common cause and were bound by a shared conception of Chinese-ness. However, this shared diasporic feeling is not necessarily permanent for many and some members may leave once the initial *raison d'être* has ceased to exist.

(2) ***The difficulties faced by Liberalism 1 and 2 brought forward by the experience of diasporas*:** Having argued that most variants of Liberalism 1 and 2 seem based upon an essentialist understanding of identity (Chapter 2, Section 2.2.2), the difficulties posed by the experience of the Chinese diaspora to these two approaches to multiculturalism are as follows. Firstly, the variability of diasporic identity emphasises how both theories approach multiculturalism in an unduly pessimistic manner, and secondly, the boundaries between groups are often more blurred and fluid than portrayed in Liberalism 2.

With regard to the first difficulty and as the experience of the diasporic Chinese in this chapter emphasises, the variability of diasporic identity illustrates how both Liberalism 1 and 2 seem to approach the complex task of multiculturalism in an unduly cynical manner. To a large degree, both positions exclude the

possibility of different groups interacting in a more positive manner by viewing differences as static and unavoidably conflictual. Liberalism 1 calls for the unavoidable conflict from differences to be disregarded and for groups to pursue their diverse ends while under the rule of law. For Liberalism 2, the best solution for the inevitable conflict is to hermetically seal differences between groups by identifying and protecting them. However, if their identities are not static and are revisable over time, this indicates that inter-group differences need not be one of constant antagonism and conflict. Undoubtedly, there will be periods of heightened antagonism but these moments should not be considered either permanent or insurmountable. Inter-group relationships have a wide range of forms (Chapter 2, Section 2.2.2) of which conflict is only one. Consequently, due to the pessimism underlying both Liberalism 1 and 2, the difficult task of multiculturalism is tainted from the beginning.

Finally, as the experiences of the diasporic Chinese have shown, cultural groups are not always organised into the distinct compartments demanded by Liberalism 2. The Chinese diasporic experience reveals that identity is better understood as strategic and variable where it floats freely within the parameters given and where, at the moment of its articulation, its floating nature is temporarily hardened. Any attempt to identify groups not only inadvertently reifies fluid and shifting difference as it also deprives individuals the space to revise their identity. Therefore, membership to these groups is rather fluid making any endeavour – as required by Liberalism 2 – to identify and protect such groups highly problematic.

In summary, Chapter Four has demonstrated through the experience of Chinese diaspora the variability of diasporic identity, the correspondingly alterable conception of home necessary for such an identity, and the applicability of the term

diaspora to capture the uniquely ephemeral diasporic identity created within diasporic networks. Subsequently, the second episode of the African diaspora in the next chapter proceeds to demonstrate how the Chinese diasporic experience is not unique as well as to further illustrate the problems Liberalism 1 and 2 face from the perspective of diasporas.

Endnotes to Chapter Four:

[1] For example, consider Wang, GW and Wah, AS. (1999). *Imagining the Chinese Diaspora: Two Australian Perspectives*, Canberra: Australia University Press, Chan, Kwok Bun. (1998). *The Chinese Diaspora*, London: University College of London Press, Wang LC and Wang GW. (eds.), (1998). *The Chinese Diaspora: Selected Essays Vol. 1*, Singapore: Times Academic Press and the Centre for the Study of the Chinese Southern Diaspora at the Australian National University.

[2] The use of overseas Chinese fiction in this manner is hardly groundbreaking. It has been done by A. Robert Lee to achieve similar goals as this chapter and also by Cynthia Wong in an attempt to understand identity negotiations of diasporic Chinese Women (Lee, 1998, Wong, 1998). Though presented as a simplistic authorial tool to provide structure to the discussion, like all academic discussion, some degree of qualification regarding the concept of 'overseas Chinese fiction' is necessary here. Since the genesis of various forms of 'hyphenated' ethnic minority literature – for example, British-Caribbean, Chinese-American, Anglo-Indian literature – those within the literary world have been faced with the question surrounding how such literature should be read (Cheung, 1997: 15, Wong, 1993: 4-5). Amy Ling captures the key question surrounding the difficulty in approaching such literature.

[3] Beginning in the Three Kingdoms period (220-280 AD) when the southern kingdom of Wu sought closer relations with the kingdoms in Southeast Asia or the *Nanyang* (the South Seas), Chinese movement went as far as Afghanistan (Wang, 2000: 1, Kotkin, 1992: 170). Before China became a republic in 1911, this outward movement accelerated and decelerated dependent upon the conditions in China as well as the imperial attitudes towards migration itself (Kotkin, 1992: 170-171).

[4] For alternative views on how such studies should be grouped, see: Ong, A and Nonini, DM., (1997), *Ungrounded Empires*, New York; London: Routledge, Pg. 5-9 and Wang, Gungwu, (1998), 'The Status of Overseas Chinese Studies', *The Chinese Diaspora: Selected Essays Vol. 1*, Wang Ling Chi and Wang Gungwu (*eds.*), Singapore: Times Academic Press.

[5] The World Huaren website may be viewed at www.huaren.org, the Chinese Alliance at members.tripod.com/~ChineseAlliance, the Huayi site is available at www.huayinet.org, and DimSum is available at www.dimsum.co.uk/index.html.

[6] The Chinese Alliance site covers a wide array of topics ranging from updates on Chinese dissidents, a section on the Asian American experience, how to appreciate Chinese tea, a campaign of the return of the DaoYuTai Islands from Japan to China and interviews with John Woo (Hong Kong director now based in Hollywood), Chow Yun Fat (actor) and Lee Hsiang Loong (Deputy Prime Minister of Singapore). The Huayi site describes itself as a 'new resource from ten Singapore organisations involved in the collecting, preservation, interpretation, and sharing of information on the Chinese outside China. Institutions include the Singapore Federation of Clan Associations, the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, and the Chinese Heritage Centre.' Besides these general sites dedicated to ethnic Chinese outside of China, a plethora of smaller sites that are more country specific are also in existence. An interesting one is DimSum, a site devoted to the British born Chinese experience. Although it comes across as more of a lifestyle website in the vein of an issue of *Cosmopolitan* or *GQ*, DimSum offers very good links to news articles concerning ethnic Chinese around the world, academic papers on Chinese identity and the ability to post from their site protest letters on British police brutality on ethnic Chinese in the UK

Chapter Five: The African Diaspora

From the mid-1950s onwards, the explicit use of the term *diaspora* began to gain currency amongst thinkers and writers concerned with the status and prospects of people of African descent inside and outside of Africa (Shepperson, 1993: 41, Drake, 1993: 451). As noted by George Shepperson, the application of the term to the experience of those of African descent can be traced to the First International Congress of Negro Writers and Artists in which took place in Paris in 1956 and the International Congress of African Historians held in Dar es Salaam in October 1965. Included in the programme of the conference in 1965 was a session entitled '*The Africans abroad or the African diaspora*' (Harris, 1993: 4, Shepperson, 1993: 41).[1]

Support for the application of the term to the African experience may be taken from the potent and obvious parallels between the Jewish and African experiences. Servitude, forced migration, exile and the development of a return movement are some of the similarities noted by a number of writers of African descent in the Americas during the 19th century as well as early West African nationalists (Shepperson, 1993). Furthermore, the term's use may be seen as a manner in which those who identify with the diaspora can rescue the negative representation of Africans and African history (Shepperson, 1993: 42). More

recently, the term has seen widespread use and has been adopted not merely to capture the experience of those of African descent abroad but also as a point of analysis for the examination of those experiences.[2] Despite the increased use of the term, some analysts question its usefulness whilst others argue that diasporic studies of the African experience should fall under the more traditional banner of Pan-African studies (Martin, 1993, Drake, 1993).

Building on the experience of the diasporic Chinese, this chapter looks at the African diaspora in order to illustrate how the Chinese experience is not unique. The experience of the Chinese revealed the contextually driven nature of identity, highlighting the fact that identity is not stagnant but varies in form dependent upon the subjectivities of different individuals. Moreover, the term diaspora was shown to be applicable to the Chinese experience, offering new insights into understanding this transnational collective. In Chapter Five, the episode of the diasporic Africans will be used to further illustrate these points as well as to tease others out. More precisely, this chapter argues for the term's applicability to the experience of those of African descent outside Africa and it seeks to understand the diasporic African experience through the use of discussions on African identity and history. Four main points are forwarded in four corresponding sections of this chapter. Firstly (Section 5.1), it is shown that the dispersal of those in a diaspora should not be framed in a purely negative context. Although the experience of slavery looms large over the history of the diasporic Africans, a significant proportion of their dispersal across the globe was voluntary. Secondly (Section 5.2), it is argued that in order to understand diasporic African identity more fully, it is necessary to understand the images contained in the hegemonic negative paradigm inflicted upon them. These negative stereotypes encountered played a considerable part in shaping diasporic African

identity. Thirdly (Section 5.3), by utilising the discussions and expressions of diasporic African identity, the chapter demonstrates that the concept of 'identity as variation' is not limited to the diasporic Chinese experience as the diasporic Africans also share it. Finally (Section 5.4), similar to the Chinese, it is argued that home for the diasporic African is a site of deferment where one finds solace in hard times. The location of this real or imagined home varies corresponding to the diasporic identity that is articulated and it plays an important role in the construction of one's diasporic identity. The chapter concludes that (Section 5.5), like the overseas Chinese experience, the term diaspora may be successfully applied to the experience of Africans outside of Africa. It is maintained that the term not only successfully captures their experiences but that it also offers a specific perspective overlooked by other approaches. In addition, in accord with Chapter Four, the points illustrated by the diasporic African experience are related to the wider concerns of the thesis. In order to do so, the experiences of the diasporic Africans are employed to elaborate on (1) the diasporic experience in general and (2) the difficulties faced by Liberalism 1 and 2 in the management of difference.

5.1 Origins and Extent of Dispersal

Similar to Wang Gungwu's (1991) division of the dispersion of the Chinese abroad (Chapter Four, Section 4.2.3), there are many ways in which one can divide the global movement of Africans abroad into phases depending on the types of movement that vary along time and space. For example, Joseph Harris suggests that the movement of Africans abroad may be distinguished from one another by their

spatial and temporal characteristics and can be divided into primary, secondary, tertiary and circulatory stages. For Harris,

> The primary stage is the original dispersion out of Africa; the secondary stage occurs with migrations from the initial settlement abroad to a second area abroad; the tertiary stage is movement to a third area abroad; and the circulatory stage involves movements among the several areas abroad and may include Africa (Harris, 1993: 8-9).

Alternatively, Emmanuel Akyeampong offers a more chronological division. For his analysis of the movement, he distinguishes between the pre-nineteenth, the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries (Akyeampong, 2000). In spite of the varied means by which the movement may be divided, the underlying goal of these approaches is a desire to extract the identities and experiences of the Africans outside of Africa in order to emphasise the diversity of those experiences.

In this section, movement pre-manumission is discussed to illustrate how initial dispersal was both forced and voluntary in an effort to attain a richer and more complex understanding of both diaspora and the African experience of it. An appreciation of this diverse experience is essential to provide a more comprehensive account of diaspora that is not represented in the more traditional accounts and definitions of the term such as that found in the *OED*. In addition, by doing so, support is found for one of the thesis' arguments against Liberalism 1 and 2, namely that diasporas are not normally a disgruntled troublesome minority whose relations with other groups in a polity demand the overly pessimistic understanding of difference and inter-group relations found in Liberalism 1 and 2.

5.1.1 *Forced Dispersion: Slavery*

In *Slavery and African Life*, Patrick Manning identifies three major routes of slavery from Africa: the internal African slave trade, the Atlantic slave trade and the Muslim or Asian slave trade (Manning, 1990). Combined, these three major routes led to a dispersal of Africans that is far and wide. In this widespread dispersal, individual African experiences of living outside Africa were extremely varied. Due the prominence of vocal Black communities in the Americas, the Atlantic slave trade has been accorded the most attention. Initial maritime contact – approximately between 1450 and 1650 – between the Europeans and Africa was not driven by the slave trade (Curtin, 1990: 42-45). The Portuguese mariners that sailed down the coast were motivated by the quest for gold. It was the growth in the demand for sugar through the development of the Brazilian sugar plantations coupled with the availability of slaves that gave rise to the development of the 'plantation complex' economic system that underpinned the Western demand for slaves (Curtin: 1990, Austen, 1986: 86, Walvin, 1996: 1-18, Blackburn, 1997: 99-108). This demand for slaves carried on until the 1888 when Brazil finally outlawed slavery. Though receiving much academic attention, efforts to calculate the number of slaves taken from Africa remains a contentious issue with the actual figure under continuous debate. The pioneering statistical survey conducted by Philip Curtin places the figure at 9.566 million by 1870 (Curtin, 1969: 268). J. E. Inikori contends that the figure is at a much higher 15.4 million, and, in a more recent survey, Paul E. Lovejoy estimates the figure to be about 11.863 million with 9.6 - 10.8 million imported alive after the average death rate during the passage has been factored in (Inikori, 1982: 20, Lovejoy, 1989: 368). Regarding the harm done to African

societies due to this mass movement, it must be mentioned that it is difficult to agree with Curtin's claim that the harm done to African communities can only be assessed properly when relating the numbers of those moved to the actual size of the community (Curtin, 1969: 269). Regardless of these calculations, it must be held that harm was done, too many were affected and the impact was devastating.

The African presence on the European continent stretches back almost two thousand years. One of the earliest record of an African presence dates back to about 210 AD where Roman emperor Septimius Severus is reported to have met an African soldier near Hadrian's Wall (Shyllon, 1993: 224). The emperor was greatly troubled by the man's colour and ordered for appeasing sacrifices to be made (Segal, 1995: 263). It was approximately in the mid-nineteenth century that permanent African settlers arrived in Britain. By 1596, their numbers were considerable enough for Elizabeth I to instruct for them to be 'sent forth of the land' as the number of 'divers blackamoores' had reached unsettling proportions (Shyllon, 1993: 225). Perhaps indicative of the future with reference to the difficulty of expelling a people, the expulsion order was unsuccessful. By the eighteenth century, African communities were established in London, Liverpool, Bristol, Hull, Manchester, Bedfordshire and Yorkshire, among other places (Shyllon, 1993: 230). These Africans were mainly domestics but they were also apprentices, tradesmen, mendicants, serenaders and beggars. From the eighteenth century onwards, African communities, both free and enslaved, existed in many cities in Europe such as Paris, Lisbon, Valencia, Barcelona, Venice and Rome (Harris, 1996: 10).

Beyond the African slaves who were shipped to either Europe or the Americas lies a generally overlooked and less publicised portion of the slave trade – African slavery in the Mediterranean, Middle East and the Indian sub-continent.

Ralph Austen estimates the total figure to be about 9 million through the trans-Saharan trade route. Around 6 million Africans were taken to the Islamic world between 660 and 1600, and 3 million between 1600 and 1900 (Austen, 1986: 275). African slaves taken via the Islamic route served a wide array of occupational spheres including the domestic, commercial, industrial, agricultural and military (Hunwick, 1992). What is notable about the Islamic slave trade given the large number of Africans affected is the question surrounding what has happened to the millions that were enslaved. Why is it, according to Bernard Lewis, '[t]here is nothing in the Arab, Persian and Turkish lands that resembles the great Black and mulatto populations of North and South America?' (cited in Hunwick, 1992: 25). There are three possible reasons for this occurrence: (1) the descendents of slaves may occupy the lower rungs of the socio-economic ladder and have had their history ignored or written out; (2) the population was unable to maintain itself due to a high death rate and a low birth rate; or (3) successful integration has been brought about though the adoption of local customs and intermarriage (Hunwick, 1992: 26-29). In truth, as Hunwick admits, there is too little data to make general statements about the existence of African communities or their successful integration or continued marginalisation in their host societies (Hunwick, 1992: 26).

5.1.2 *Free Movement: Free Africans during the Period of Slavery*

Notwithstanding the fact that slavery played a massive role in the origins of the dispersal of Africans abroad and besides the fact that the term diaspora, in reference to the African experience, conjures up connotations of hurt, loss and involuntary exile, it is important not to perpetually frame the experience in a negative context.

As acknowledged by George Shepperson, an overemphasis on the slave trade has obscured the wider picture of African dispersal (Shepperson, 1993: 46). By taking onboard the voluntary element of dispersal, one is freed from an overly rigid concept that prevents a more comprehensive understanding. Voluntary movement by Africans is an important aspect to acknowledge to ensure that the analytical space opened up by the term diaspora is not prematurely closed. By being persistently related to a tremendously torturous event, life in the diaspora may become excluded from the possibility of being interpreted in a positive manner as the analytical approach may unintentionally trap its subject through the application of a one-sided lens. Of course slavery remains a major part of the examination of the African diaspora, yet a strict focus on this aspect is only destined to become a study solely engaging with on forced dispersal instead of examining the wider picture available (Shepperson, 1993: 46). Importantly, this is not an attempt to lessen the significance of the collective trauma that the slave trade brought about but is instead and attempt to attain a richer and more complex understanding of the term and its applicability to the African experience.

Existing parallel to the Atlantic and Islamic slave trade was the movement of free Africans along the slave routes as sailors, merchants, tourists and students. For their return trips to Europe, European captains often employed the maritime Kru of Liberia or the Mina of the Gold Coast to replace members of crew that had been lost to illness (Akyeampong, 2000: 191). These Africans then became part of a process of cyclical migration by returning to Africa on other outgoing voyages before leaving once again for Europe. Furthermore, from the fifteenth century onwards, intermarriages between African elite families and European merchants lead to many of their offspring being sent to Europe for their education. Trade and diplomatic

missions were also sent from Africa to Europe beginning in the sixteenth century. In 1555, African linguists were sent to Britain to become proficient in the English language in order to facilitate trade (Shyllon, 1993: 225). By the eighteenth century, diasporic Africans had a strong foothold in Britain. They had fought for the British in the American War of independence and many were granted sanctuary in England after the war had ended (West, 1970: 14-15). One of the most famous examples of successful Africans in Europe is that of Olaudah Equiano. Equiano was an ex-slave who rose up in society to move comfortably in affluent metropolitan circles during the height of British slavery in the eighteenth century (Walvin, 2000: 102-103). He championed the abolitionist cause and lived off the sales of his autobiography that was first published in 1789 and of which nine editions were published during his lifetime (Equiano, 1995: xxix). He travelled without difficulty within Britain and also internationally, criss-crossing the Atlantic between Britain, the Caribbean and North America. With his travels across the Atlantic, Equiano provides a valuable example of the beginnings of the international diasporic African network that had developed into the British Black Atlantic by the late eighteenth century. This network is similar to the diasporic Chinese networks previously discussed (See Chapter Four, Section 4.3) and it continues to facilitate the movement of members of the African diaspora between the Caribbean, North America and Britain up to today. By 1787, Equiano's prominence within the African community of Britain rose to such a standing that the British government employed his services in a campaign to recruit the Black poor for 'repatriation' to Sierra Leone. Another important contribution by Equiano – which will be dealt with in greater depth below – lies in the persistent tension that exists between his dual identity; an identity that demands a constant negotiation between his 'African' self and his 'British' or 'English' self.

Besides the voluntary movement of Africans to Europe and their achievements, the movement of Africans and their influence on the Indian sub-continent has been an under-researched aspect of the African diaspora. This is unfortunate as the influence they had is particularly impressive in reflection of their numbers. (Harris, 1993b: 336). One of the more famed groups who had a noteworthy influence on Indian history are the Siddis. The Siddis were Abyssinians who arrived in Janijira Island off the west coast of India in around 1489 and established a prominent role as the naval power of the northwestern coast of India (Harris, 1993b: 327-328). Benefiting from their maritime and military skills as well as their strategic location in the Indian Ocean at a time when European maritime trade began to extend to South and East Asia, the Siddis exercised a large influence not only on the policies of Britain, Portugal and the Netherlands but also on that of local Indian powers (Harris, 1993b: 329-336). For example, in the first half of the seventeenth century, the balance of power between the Indian kingdoms of Mughul and Marathas shifted from one to another dependent upon Siddi support (Harris, 1993b: 329). In the second half of the seventtenth century, Siddi support was courted by the Portuguese, Dutch and British who were hoping to retain control over the trade route along India's west coast (Harris, 1993b: 330-336). The Siddis ultimately lost their influence by succumbing to British power and their present status on the island is insignificant. Though the island is a district of India with a Siddi as its ceremonial head, the Siddis remain perceived of as foreigners (Akeyeampong, 2000: 195).

On the basis of the discussion above on the forced and voluntary elements of African dispersal, it is possible to appreciate that not all movement leading to African dispersal was involuntary. Moreover, as illustrated in the cases of Equiano

and the Siddis, life outside Africa resulting from this voluntary aspect of migration was not filled with utter despair and hardship. Therefore, to approach and to frame the African diaspora in a purely negative light fails to do justice to the wider picture. As the African experience of dispersal illustrates, the term diaspora and its traditionally negative connotations may have to be replaced by a more expansive understanding that is able to take on board more diverse experiences. Nonetheless, although the notion of diaspora should also include positive experiences, the experiences of those that moved out of Africa were often marred by widespread racism which they encountered in the receiving countries. As a consequence, these negative stereotypes have impacted on the way diasporic Africans construct their identity and understand their diasporic condition. It is towards these negative stereotypes that the next section will turn.

5.2 Whitewashing African Worth: The Stigmatisation of Africans and Africa

In the previous section, it was shown that African movement outside of Africa pre-manumission was a combination of both involuntary and voluntary movement. Although voluntary movement and accomplishments of Africans outside of Africa has been overlooked to a large degree and the history of the diasporic Africans has been subsequently framed and understood in a predominantly negative light, this is not to say that diasporic African life on a whole was not faced with great difficulties. A continuous barrage of negative stereotyping prevalent at all levels of society often confronted Africa and Africans pre- and post-manumission. In this section, it is argued that diasporic African identity may be understood more fully only if the

negative images imposed upon diasporic Africans are taken into account. In accord with the argument of this thesis that individuals may vary their identity over time and place within the boundaries of what has been articulated before as well as external factors, these negative stereotypes confronted many diasporic Africans in their life outside Africa and they have played a significant part in shaping diasporic African identity.

Up to the nineteenth century, there were practical benefits to the widely held belief in European and North American societies of supposed White supremacy. By portraying Africans as savages, the justification of the slave trade and Western imperialism in Africa was made easier (Davidson, 1994: 63). The significance of these images of Africans and Africa is illustrated by its increase once the slave trade had gathered momentum. Before 1650, initial contact between the Africans and the Europeans was based on a relationship of mutual respect. While difference was acknowledged, the perception of inferiority had not arisen yet (Davidson, 1994: 40-64). After the practise of slavery, the dominant negative narrative of Africa and Africans developed from many segments of society with the philosophical, scientific and Christian beliefs of the period spearheading the justification and furthering this negative paradigmatic complex. The depth of racism and the general acceptance of Africans and Africa representing, at best, nothing, and at worst, only the negative, were common. Thomas Jefferson on Africans held:

> They are more ardent after their female: but love seems with them to be more of an eager desire than a tender delicate mixture of sentiment and sensation. Their griefs are transient... In general, their existence appears to participate more of sensation than reflection... never yet could I find a black had uttered a thought above the level of plain narration; never seen even an elementary trait of painting or sculpture.... I advance it therefore as a suspicion only,

> that the blacks, whether originally a distinct race, or made distinct by time and circumstances, are inferior to the whites in the endowments both of body and mind (Jefferson, 1955: 138-143).

It is noteworthy that these are views of the same man who drafted the Declaration of Independence of the United States, who was a supporter of the French Revolution and a hero of the American Left. The negative portrayal of all things African is further exemplified in Hegel's infamous dismissal of Africa and Africans in his lectures on the philosophy of history. For Hegel, Africans were cannibals who possessed neither justice nor morality. Furthermore, Africa was seen to have 'no historical part of the World; it has no movement or development to exhibit' and Africa is a 'unhistorical, undeveloped spirit, still involved in the conditions of mere nature' only 'on the threshold of the World's History' (Hegel, 1872: 97-103). Hegel was not alone in his opinion. Adding to David Hume's belief in White superiority (Curtin, 1965: 42), Kant held that

> the African Negro has no feelings which rise above the trifling... among the hundreds of thousands of blacks who are transported elsewhere from their countries, although many of them have been set free, still not a single one was ever found who presented anything great in art or science or any other praise worthy quality, even though among the whites some [whites] continually rise aloft from the lowest rabble, and through superior gifts earn respect in the world. So fundamental is the difference between these two races of men (Kant, 1960: 110-111).

Beyond representing examples of widespread racism within North American and European society, their views betray a more insidious self-inflicted 'blindness' to African achievements that made the removal of these stereotypes all the more

difficult. Both Hume and Kant were aware of several prominent Africans in Europe but both failed to acknowledge them in their work (Blakely, 1999: 94-97). Thus, not only were Africans dismissed as inferior from the start but also, having overcome this initial disadvantage, their achievements were often not recognised.

These views were bolstered by contentious interpretations of passages in the Bible and *Talmud* as well as by the science of the period (Itandala, 2001: 74-78). The interpretation of Biblical texts to lower the worth of Africans was especially useful in circumventing the problem Christian morality faced as a result of the practise of slavery. Slave owners and their supporters referred to *Genesis* in order to generate the 'Hamitic Myth' (Pieterse, 1992: 44-45). The myth understood Africans to be inferior as they were the descendents of the cursed Ham whilst maintaining inherent European superiority through their lineage tracing back to Japheth, one of the blessed sons of Noah (Genesis, 9: 18-27). Therefore, although all human beings were the descendents of Adam via Noah, the continents peopled by the descendents of Japheth (Europe), Sem (Asia) and Ham (Africa) could be ranked in a master-slave relationship. Interpreted as such, Christian society could account for both the unity of creation in addition to the status of Africans as slaves (Pieterse, 1992: 44). The Jewish *Talmud* was utilised for the same purpose. From the *Talmud* it was argued God turned the colour of Ham and his African descendents black to indicate their preordainment for slavery as punishment for Ham's copulation with a dog on the Ark, (Sanders, 1969: 522). Besides the Hamitic Myth and contentious interpretations of the *Talmud* in order to justify African inferiority, the Judeo-Christian faith proved versatile enough to also be deployed as a tool to deny Africans the ability to prevail over their predicament (Blakely, 1999: 91-92). For example, Chapter 13 of *Jeremiah*

(lines 23 and 24) was construed to provide evidence for the inability of Africans to overcome
their inferiority. *Jeremiah* questions

> [c]an the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil? Therefore I will scatter them as the stubble that passeth away by the wind of the wilderness (Jeremiah, 13: 23-24).

This interpretation when associated with the previously established pre-destined inferiority of Africans proved to be a devastating narrative to ensure that not only were Africans inferior to begin with but they were also unable to rise above their station.

With regard to the employment of the science of the day, geographical determinism was one of the methods in which science was used to justify slavery and the inferiority of Africans (Pieterse, 1992: 44-45). Geographical determinism maintained the attributes of a people were determined by place and climate and, as such, the difference between Africa's tropical climate and Europe's temperate one produced two races of differing qualities, abilities and worth. The Europeans were permitted to become far superior to the Africans due to a climate conducive to hard work and science. Another use of science to justify and reinforce the negative stigmatisation of Blacks is exemplified by the work of Charles White and David Long (Itandala, 2001: 77, Blakely, 1999: 99). In 1779, White forwarded his theory on evolution where Africans were placed as the intermediary group between the great apes and White Europeans (Blakely, 1999). Long proposed a similar thesis where, in an attempt to explain the evolution of humankind from simple organisms,

he placed Africans as a subhuman species that was closer to the apes (Itandala, 2001: 77). Another of the more persistent scientific arguments on the concept of racial hierarchy has been craniology and craniometry in it various guises (Blakely, 1999: 99).[3]

Therefore, the combination of philosophy, Christianity and science brought about an emerging consensus of Africa being the 'Dark Continent' with subhuman, heathen and barbarous inhabitants *vis-à-vis* superior Europeans and North Americans. Depending on one's disposition, this view made Africans the prime candidates for either a 'civilising mission' in the vein of Rudyard Kipling's White man's burden[4] or it legitimated the practise of slavery (Skinner, 1999: 50). Moreover, this predominant negative paradigm to understand Africa and Africans was one the majority of the diaspora have had to contend with and resist in their daily lives as well as when formulating their identity.

5.3 Diasporic African Identity: Negritude, Afrocentrism and Double Consciousness

The first time the NBA was in the 'lympics....
So how could ten Africans represent America?
Bullshit, it didn't mean a thing
'Cause in the same year we saw Rodney King
(Dream Team, Spearhead, 1994)

I got a letter from the government the other day
I opened and read it and said they were suckers
They wanted me for their army or whatever
Picture me giving a damn – I said never
Here is a land that never gave a damn
About a brother like me and myself
(Black Steel in the Hour of Chaos, Public Enemy: 1988)

As the quotes above allude to and as the discussion in the previous sections reveals, though there were positive and negative reasons for the movement out of Africa, negative stereotyping of Africans and Africa more often than not impacted negatively on those of the diaspora. Therefore, it is not difficult to assume that the appeal to and formation of a collective identity for many of the African diaspora was to a large degree a response to these negative images. Coupled with and related to these negative experiences is the shame that comes with an association with African. For many, Africa and African-ness represents poverty, White superiority, exploitation and the loss of self-respect (Cohen, 1997: 40). These problems faced by those of African descent are exacerbated by the fact that many are unable to distance themselves from their African-ness due to their phenotypic characteristics. The

experience of those of African descent is thus similar to but subtly different from Sartre's understanding of the Jewish condition (Sartre, 1995). Like the Jews, those of African descent are forced to contend with the image created by many through a racist desire to exclude the Other – an image without any objective content. However, unlike the Jews, those of African descent are unable to avoid this stereotyping by blending in and going unnoticed. As noted by Frantz Fanon, Africans are 'given no chance' and are 'overdetermined from without' as they are the slave by virtue of their own appearance and not the 'idea' that others have of them (Fanon, 1986: 116).

In spite of the common problems experienced by many members of the African diaspora in their attempt to articulate a collective identity, members face the difficult task of establishing a coherent identity that is able to capture a multitude of diverse experiences and settings. The discussion in the first section of this chapter on their original dispersal pre-manumission reveals the following. Corresponding with what was stressed in the preceding chapter regarding the diasporic Chinese and despite the blanket use of diaspora to encapsulate varied and diverse experiences, the African diaspora is neither monolithic nor united. Attempts by many in the diaspora at formulating and articulating an African diasporic identity are exceedingly difficult for three reasons. Firstly, the boundaries of a diaspora are not demarcated neatly into a sovereign territory making its members a more varied group. Secondly, with no common language or culture, finding common historical roots has been far from easy. Finally, although many diasporic Africans see themselves as an oppressed community away from home, there is little agreement on where home actually is. Is Africa a village, tribe, state or a mythical site of redemption?[5] In summary, diasporic

Africans have come from different places, for different reasons, have arrived at different locations and have experienced different forms of treatment.

The difficulties in formulating a common diasporic identity notwithstanding, frequent attempts have been made to develop a diasporic African identity. In general, diasporic African identity has been articulated and argued for in two major ways under a variety of banners. Both positions can be seen most clearly in reference to the competing interpretations surrounding the concept of Negritude. The concept of Negritude can be defined as the affirmation of African history, culture and heritage and is a concept that is driven by the desire to throw off the stigma attached to those of African descent (Nesbitt, 1999). The term is generally understood in two ways: it can be understood as an unchanging core or essence that continues to bind all in the diaspora or, alternatively, it can be understood as a signifier for the continual development of a diasporic African identity as a response to a balancing of 'where you are from' and 'where you are at'. Expression of the first understanding can be found in the thought of Léopold Sédar Senghor and Marcus Garvey and expressions of the second in the work of Aimé Césaire and WEB Du Bois.[6] Both types of Negritude, as we shall see, may be attributed largely to acts of resistance – a resistance to a combination of the negative understanding of African worth discussed above, the continued experience of racism and the painful backdrop of slavery.

In this section, the two forms of diasporic African identity articulated in response to their predicament are discussed. The objective here is to show that these diverse forms, though varied, support the argument that diasporic identity may best be understood as variation where even the most rudimentary sense of solidarity is contingent, constantly in flux and socially constructed (Lemelle and Kelly, 1994: 7).

Despite the variability of diasporic African identity and its expression in an assortment of apparently jumbled permutations, the temptation to dismiss its importance due to its apparent incoherence should be eschewed. As observed by one commentator on the diasporic Chinese, internal divisions should not be seen as a weakness but as a strong point as 'the strength of the community lies not in their internal stability but in their internal dynamism, mutability and transiency' (Christiansen, 1998: 52). Due to this commonality and diversity, African diasporic identity is persistently being constituted, reconstituted and reproduced; the burden carried by those in the diaspora is the persistent need to come to terms with being different as well as to understand the meaning of that difference.

5.3.1 *Identity as an Unchanging Essence*

The first manner in which Negritude may be understood is via Léopold Sédar Senghor's essentialised understanding of it being an unchanging core or essence of Black existence (Nesbitt, 1999: 1404, Gendzier, 1973: 41). This alternative understanding of the term also falls under the title of Afrocentrism (Early, 1995: 131). Often using 'rhythm' as a metaphor for this essence of African-ness, Senghor in '*She Who is Absent*' proclaims that:

> My glory is not engraved on pillars nor shall
> my voice be petrified on stone
> it'll be a rhythmic, perfectly tuned instrument (cited in Finn, 1988: 59).

For Senghor, all Africans, through being African, share uniquely African characteristics in emotion, intuition and creativity. Negritude accordingly becomes

'the whole of the values of civilization – cultural, economical, social, political – which characterises Black people. It is essentially instinctive reason, which pervades all these values' (Finn, 1988: 58). Thus, African-ness is not something physical 'engraved on pillars' or 'petrified on stone'. Instead, it is metaphysical in the sense of being similar to a rhythm resonating from a musical instrument where an intangible commonality is shared by all Africans that structures their view of the world.

It is unsurprising that the use of this particular understanding of Negritude garnered much support when employed by individuals such as Marcus Garvey. Under this light, Negritude offered a manner through which his followers' desperate need to attain self-esteem and dignity could be achieved as it allowed for an escape from the abasement and self-hatred that came from within the package of the imperial/colonial experience as well as the vivid memory of slavery. Garvey was a Jamaican-born African nationalist who argued strongly for Black self-empowerment during the early 20th century. For Garvey, those of African descent should take great pride in the culture and achievements of Africans.[7] Founded in 1914, Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) became one of the most popular diasporic African political groups with eight hundred chapters in forty countries on four continents comprising of nearly and million members with two or three times that number participating in its activities (Vincent, 1971: 13). For Garvey, the goal was a restoration of race pride and the manner by which it was to be attained was through African nationalism and the economic independence of the African race from the Whites. Central to Garvey's philosophy was the idea of race purity. His speeches gave little doubt of this view as for Garvey

> [t]he Uncle Tom Nigger has to go, and in his place must be taken by the new leader of the Negro race. That man will not be a white man with a black heart, nor a black man with a white heart, but a black man with a black heart (cited in Cronon, 1955: 173).

Following this, it was therefore logical for Garvey to be wary of integration. In an article in the Jamaican newspaper *The Blackman*, Garvey states explicitly that '[i]f God intended that we should mix and lose our identity, why should He have made you separate and distinct from the other man?' (Garvey, 1977: 30). Demonstrating the divisions between members of a diaspora as well as the variable identity of its members, the use of racial purity as a tool to achieve solidarity within the diaspora was not as successful as Garvey had hoped for. While it had a special appeal to many Jamaicans due to the resented privileged position of the mulatto community, it did not strike a resounding cord in the US where African Americans did not make a significant distinction between shades of colour (Cronon, 1955: 191).

The spirit of racial pride and solidarity pervaded all assorted activities of the Garvey movement. The Black Star Line Steamship Corporation, the Negro Factories Corporation, the African League, the publication of *Negro World* and the Black Cross Nurses were all examples of how Garvey intended his dream to be realised. The Black Star Line (BSL) was an important instrument for the realisation of his dream as 'Africa must be linked to the United States of America. Africa must be linked to South and Central America. Africa must be linked to the West Indies, so that there can be an unbroken intercourse between the four hundred million Negroes of the world' (Garvey, 1984: 10) This was needed as it allowed for unity to be fostered which subsequently ensured that the African race would not be able to be taken advantage of any longer (Garvey, 1984: 23). Thus, what these

networks/enterprises make clear is the mutually beneficial relationship between the creation and fostering of a diasporic identity and the networks themselves. Neither can exist independently of each other as participation within the network/enterprise requires some perceived shared identity whilst the appeal of this shared identity is aided by the success of theses ventures.

The key to Garvey's thought was that diasporic Africans had to help create an independent Africa in order to escape from indoctrination and subjugation. Similar to the Chinese nationalists who created modern China, Garvey was of the view that Africa needed to be redeemed in order for his project to succeed.[8] In a speech delivered at a UNIA meeting in Canada in 1921, he maintained: 'Africa is mine; Africa is the land of my fathers; and what my fathers never gave to anybody else, since they did not will it to anybody, must have been for me' (Garvey, 1984: 151). Garvey's frustration at being part of this diaspora is explicit later in the same speech. Here, he expressed his anger that it was constantly made clear to him throughout his travels that he was in someone else's county and declares that the time had come for him to be allowed to declare to others that 'this is a black man's country' (Garvey, 1984: 151). Garvey's position on whether it was vital for all Blacks to return to Africa or whether Africa was to act as a safe haven for those outside it if need be remains ambiguous. If his widow is to be believed, '[a]t no time did he visualise all American Negroes returning to Africa' (Cronon, 1955: 185). This attempt to tie Africa to his conception of African diasporic identity and solidarity was a double-edged sword. Like the issue of racial purity, it divided members of the diaspora and exposed the varying understandings of their diasporic identity. It appealed to the mainly immigrant workers in Panama and Costa Rica who had almost no hope of political betterment, but it alienated others of African

descent in countries such as the US – who were better off materially – and those in Trinidad and Barbados – who had more of a chance to finally take control of their countries (Vincent, 1971: 174).

The study of Garveyism is important in understanding the formation and transmission of diasporic culture in order to sustain political organisation and enterprise. An essentialised notion of African culture was developed and sustained through transnational political organisation and economic enterprise. Within the political and economic networks, a diasporic identity was developed that required those networks to be sustained as much as those networks required a perceived common identity to be successful. Garveyism as a movement may have failed due to its inability to sustain both these necessary elements. As highlighted above, the diaspora was too disparate a group to be united through Garvey's particular formulation of an African diasporic identity and his understanding of Africa. In addition, the BLS, the key element in his network development necessary to sustain a diasporic identity failed due to mismanagement.

Although the Garvey movement failed to achieve its goals, Garveyism as a cultural expression was far-reaching and radical in its impact (Blair, 1994: 123). The pride in and drive for self-mastery he gave those in the diaspora offered hope to a people who were badly discontented and disillusioned. Its philosophy reshaped the political consciousness of its adherents and offered them an alternative window from which they could evaluate their lives, influencing the creation of organisations such as the Nation of Islam in the US, movements such as the Rastafarians and the drive for independence in the colonies (Blair, 1994).[9]

5.3.2 *Identity as Dynamic*

Aimé Césaire and WEB Du Bois held an alternative conception of Negritude to that of Léopold Sédar Senghor and Marcus Garvey. Césaire was from Martinique and he first coined the term Negritude in 1930 in his poem *Cahier d'un retour au pays natal* (Notebook of the return to my native land). At its core, Césaire's original conception of Negritude held the specificity and unity of Black existence to be a historically developing phenomenon arising out of the slave trade and colonialism (Nesbitt, 1999: 1404-1407, Gendzier, 1974, 41). Negritude for Césaire was a means by which alienation could be combated – an alienation those of African descent felt from their history and culture due to the negative portrayal of African history by the colonialists (Césaire, 1972: 73). It was a resistance to the colonial understanding of Africa as backward and the belief that 'the best thing one could do with an African was to assimilate him', thus to relieve him of his history by turning him into a White man (Césaire, 1972: 73). According to Césaire's usage,

> My negritude is not a stone, its deafness thrown up against the clamour of the day
> My negritude is not a pool of dead water on the dead eye of the earth
> My negritude is neither a tower nor a cathedral
> it delves into the red flesh of the soil
> it plunges into the scorching flesh of the day (cited in Finn, 1988: 38)

Therefore, Negritude is not a lifeless object (stone, pool, tower or cathedral); it is active and creative (delves and plunges). Diasporic African identity then becomes a site of continued negotiation; a self-created identity whose appeal lies in the possibilities it offers for resistance and whose formation is historically bound to the

experience of a common painful history and driven by a continued experience of exclusion in the host country. The view of diasporic identity as dynamic finds an echo in Ralph Ellison's work (Ellison, 1972: 234). Discussed in Chapter Three (Section 3.2.3, Pg. 88), for Ellison, an identity is forged when an individual asserts himself 'within and against the group' in the same manner Jazz musicians define their identity with every solo performance (Ellison, 1972: 234). Thus, Ellison conceives identity to be dynamic and not static, something created and willed rather than bestowed or innate. Furthermore, like individuals taking a solo in a Jazz group when performing, this idea of identity allows for difference to exist alongside similarity as it is not necessary to be in complete accord with the group.

Pre-dating Césaire, WEB Du Bois' work expresses a tension within diasporic identity between host and perceived home that arrives at a similar understanding of diasporic African identity as Césaire's usage of Negritude. For Du Bois, an African American experiences

> a peculiar sensation, this double consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of the world that looks on in amused contempt and pity.... two souls, two thoughts two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body.... The history of the American Negro is the history of this strife, – this longing to attain self-conscious manhood, to merge his double self into a better and truer self (Du Bois, 1999: 11).

In Du Bois' 1897 essay, *Strivings of the Negro People* first published in *Atlantic* (now called the *Atlantic Monthly*) – and in the expansion of the argument made there in *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903) – the experience of 'double consciousness' is articulated to express the dynamism of diasporic African identity. In both essays, Du

Bois argues for a duality of existence – of being both an American and an African – as an alternative to either assimilation or separation. Du Bois uses double consciousness to refer to three issues: firstly, there is the issue of the power of White stereotypes in Black life; secondly, there is the issue of the lived racism felt by many African Americans that often excluded them from mainstream American society; and finally, there is the issue of being caught in the no-man's land of feeling neither fully American nor African (Bruce, 1992). Although portrayed here as three distinct issues, the three issues should not be viewed as mutually exclusive. Having to live with the burden of a stereotype persistently forced upon you coupled with the experience of day-to-day racism would certainly feed into feelings of being neither American nor African. One cannot return but one also gets the feeling that remaining is also not an option.

An example of the perpetual tension that is present due to these three issues may be seen through Equiano's *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African* (1789). Throughout the autobiography, beginning with its title, a balance is continually struck between Equiano's British and African identities. Gustavus Vassa was the name given to him by his second slave master and the phrase 'the African' placed behind it in the title may have been used to highlight his unsettled duality of identity. Periodically through *The Narrative*, Equiano reminds the reader of the difficulty in straddling two seemingly incompatible identities. He maintains that

> '[f]rom the various scenes I had beheld on ship-board, I soon grew a stranger to terror of every kind, and was, in that respect at least, *almost* an Englishman' (Equiano, 1995: 77 emphasis added).

Furthermore, referring to a period when he was in the Americas when he almost begins to convince himself of his British-ness by remarking that 'I began to think of leaving this part of the world, of which I had been long tired, and of returning to England, where my heart has always been....' (Equiano, 1995: 147), the treatment he is receives from Whites in Georgia serves as a stark reminder that his adoption of British identity can never be fully achieved (Equiano, 1995: 158-159). This rebuff experienced by Equiano in America illustrates the point made in Chapter Four (Section 4.3) that although identity is variable, particular formulations may be constrained by external factors.

Despite the variable nature of identity as emphasised in Du Bois work and exemplified by Equiano's experience, Du Bois' conception of a diasporic African identity may be charged with being no different from Senghor's or Garvey's as it builds upon an underlying essentialised notion of African-ness. At face value, Du Bois in *The Conservation of Races* does seem to defend the concept of race as coherent (Du Bois, 1999). He maintains that

> '[w]e cannot reverse history; we are subject to the same natural laws as other races, and if the Negro is ever to be a factor in world history.... [then] the gaily-colored banners that deck the broad ramparts of civilization is to hang one uncompromising black' (Dubois, 1999: 180).

This essentialised notion of race and its implicit connotations of an unchanging essence notwithstanding, Du Bois in the same article proclaims any scientific definition of race problematic. He holds that '[u]nfortunately for scientists, however, these criteria of race are most exasperatingly intermingled' (Du Bois, 1999: 177).

Du Bois as such did not create the concept of race; he merely adopted the common use of the term (Gbadegesin, 1996: 226).

Uncomfortable with a scientific definition of race but unwilling to give it up, Du Bois instead relies on a socio-historical or cultural definition of race. The differences between the 'races' for Du Bois include the 'spiritual and psychical difference' that allow for the 'cohesiveness and continuity of the groups' that transcends physical differences (Du Bois, 1999: 179). A non-American example of diasporic identity being achieved through the balancing of host and history is illustrated by returning to the experience of the Siddis in India as discussed above. In a situation similar to the Peranakans discussed in Chapter Four (Section 4.2.1), the Siddis have been present on the sub-continent for centuries but their right to land is not recognised, emphasising the perception of them as foreigners (Akeyeampong, 2000: 195). Due to this, the Siddis have been forced to continually balance their cultural heritage with their desire to be treated as full Indian nationals.

In sum, Du Bois with his idea of double consciousness desired to be both African and American and did not see either to be mutually exclusive. He praised the significance of African culture but also insisted African Americans should come to terms with American life. He wished for the opportunity to inhabit a world where Blacks could accept America without being scorned by their fellows, as, according to Du Bois, Blacks should not 'attempt to Africanise America for America has too much to teach the world and Africa'. In addition, this world would accept Blacks without the price of losing their 'Negro soul in a flood of white Americanism' as 'Negro blood has a message for the world' (Lewis: 1993: 352).

5.4 The Relationship between the Diasporic African Experience and Home

If you know your history
Then you would know where you are coming from
Then you wouldn't have to ask me
Who the hell do I think I am?
(*Buffalo Soldier*, Bob Marley: 1983)

What is Africa to me
Copper sun or scarlet sea
Jungle star or jungle track
Strong black men or regal black
Women from whose loins I sprang
When the birds of Eden sang
One three centuries removed
From the scenes his father told
Spring grove, cinnamon tree
What is Africa to me?
(*Heritage*, Countee Cullen, 1947)

As seen in the work of Senghor, Garvey, Césaire and Du Bois, a persistent feature that has arisen in the discussion about diasporic African identity thus far has been the understanding of home for members of the African diaspora. Concurring with the diasporic Chinese experience of Chapter Four, diasporic African identity is bound to a variable understanding of home where the location of home is dependent upon the diasporic identity that is articulated. Due to their essentialised understanding of diasporic African identity, individuals such as Senghor and Garvey possessed a firmer understanding of home as opposed to individuals such as Césaire and Du Bois. On the one hand, for Senghor, Garvey and their followers, their

particular brand of diasporic identity required an actual physical location of home, be it a village, state or the continent of Africa itself. On the other hand, for Césaire and Du Bois, owing to their more dynamic understanding of African identity, the idea of home was permitted to be more vague.

Analogous to the variable diasporic Chinese conception of China as home, Africa for the diasporic Africans is a site of multiple meanings. Home is a site of multiple meanings including, for example, an actual physical space such as a village, state or continent. However, home may also be an imagined space where the tension of Du Bois' double-consciousness is resolved, and finally, it may be a combination of both. The lack of a consensus on the location of home stems from the 'in-between' characteristic of diaspora and its hazy location feeds into the variable nature of diasporic identity. Africa offers an area of possibility where the diasporic African is no longer oppressed physically or psychologically; a site where the tension of being African in an alien culture may no longer be present. As it was illustrated in the discussion on the Chinese diasporic experience, the understanding and position of home may vary but the idea of home, nonetheless, plays a pivotal role in the construction of a diasporic identity.

In this section, the various competing understandings of home for the African diaspora are discussed. An understanding of the role of home in diasporic identity formation is crucial to attaining an understanding of both the diasporic experience as well as the manner in which the management of difference should be framed. If diasporas are understood to possess a firm conception of home – that is, an actual physical site – the policy of multiculturalism employed to deal with such an essentialised notion of difference becomes unavoidably more pessimistic. If individuals do not consider the place they currently reside in home, then they will

never fit in and multiculturalism should ensure that their dislocation should not impact too negatively on the rest of the polity. However, if home is understood to be a mere idea – an element of historical baggage and a factor that can vary with the identity articulated – the policy on multiculturalism deployed to manage such difference can hold that such groups need not be viewed as problematic and inter-group difference need not be one of perpetual conflict. In this section, it is shown that the location of home varies in accordance with the diasporic identity that is articulated. The more essentialised the diasporic identity (re: Marcus Garvey), the more essentialised the location of home. Conversely, the less essentialised the diasporic identity articulated (re: Du Bois and Equiano), the less essentialised the location of home. Moreover, since all identity is variable with an ability to shift from an essentialised notion to another that is less so, it is argued that Liberalism 1 and 2 need not be overly pessimistic in their approach to the management of difference as not all inter-group difference necessarily results in conflict.

The manner in which home varies is contingent upon the experiences of individuals. For example, from the sixteenth century onwards, some Africans in the Americas desired to return to Africa, some sought solace and strength in Pan-Africanism whilst others have argued that the Americas was now home and all that was wanted was a fair deal. The varying responses to their situation may be seen, on the one hand, in actions of the Black nationalists who took inspiration from Theodore Herzl's Zionist ideals and sought to build a homeland for all dispersed Africans in Liberia (Drachler, 1975: 3). On the other hand, others such as Ralph Ellison challenged the concept of Africa as the Black Zion, holding that if everyone had to have 'some place to be proud of.... I am proud of Abbeville, South Carolina, and Oklahoma City. That is enough for me' (cited in Drachler, 1975: 3).

Furthermore, the understanding of Africa may also encapsulate both an actual physical space as well as a mythical site of resistance and possibilities. An attachment to a physical place may be seen in the example of Haitian practise where a male of African descent may take pride in the fact that he is *neg Ginin* (a Black from Guinea) (Montilus, 1993: 160-164). For such Guinean Haitians, the location of Guinea is both real and mythical and it is found in an Africa representing valour and virtue. Guinea may thus be an actual physical space in Africa or a mythical place called upon to resist a history of slavery, suffering and humiliation. A Guinean Haitian would be insulted to be referred to as *neg Congo* (a Black from the Congo) as it carries with it stereotypes from the days of slavery where the slaves from the Congo were thought to have been docile house slaves. Moreover, these stereotypes in the physical realm are also reflected in Haitian mythology where Guinean spirits are seen to be strong and helpful whilst those from the Congo are docile and uninterested in the destiny of the people.

Another example in which Africa is taken to mean both a physical place as well as a mythical site of possibilities may be found in Rastafarian thought. The Rastafarian movement reached its height with the crowning of Ras Tafari as Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia in 1930 (Cohen, 1997: 38). Emerging from Jamaica, based on the return movement ideas propagated by Garvey and the Ethiopian Baptist church's interpretation of particular passages of the bible and fuelled by widespread discontentment stemming from poverty and the popularity of reggae music, Rastafarianism soon spread out from Jamaica to the rest of the Caribbean, the US and the UK (Barrett, 1977: 1-28, 197-200, Miles, 1978: 3-11). Despite the lack of a single leader and coherent organisation, its core beliefs are identifiable as: (1) Haile Selassie is a living God that would bring about Africa's

redemption; (2) those in the diaspora are in a Babylonian-like exile; and (3) home is either Ethiopia or Africa (Miles, 1978: 6). Emphasising the correspondence between the identity articulated and the particular vision of home, 'Ethiopia' and 'Africa' alternates between the two conceptions depending on the individual.

Attachment to the physical space of Ethiopia found expression when emotions boiled over in East Harlem, New York in October 1935. In response to the Italian invasion of Ethiopia, many African Americans carried out attacks against their Italian neighbours (Cohen, 1997:39). However, when some Rastafarians who had an essentialised understanding of home as the physical site of Ethiopia actually did 'return', many were shocked to discover that Ethiopia was not what they had imagined it to be. As expressed by Hall, '[t]here was no fifteenth century Mother waiting to succour her children....they wanted [instead] to go to....that other Africa which was constructed in the language and ritual of Rastafarianism (Hall, 1995: 14).

Nevertheless, as noted by Ernest Cashmore, to portray the Rastafarian movement simply as an attempt to repatriate those of African descent outside Africa would be too simplistic (Cashmore, 1983: 235). The issue of 'home' for some Rastafarians may be seen to be both an actual physical space as well as a spiritual one (Cashmore, 1983: 236). In Rastafarian thought, Africa rather confusingly may exist either physically and return was inevitable or, failing which, Africa could also be a mindset and outlook to 'free' a Rasta from his Babylonian hell. Rastafarianism's ambiguity on Africa may be viewed as an asset rather than a weakness as its flexibility, unlike Garveyism, allowed individuals more interpretational freedom. With a less essentialised understanding of home, individuals could articulate their own brand of identity depending upon their own personal situation whilst still keeping within the general diasporic identity narrative.

Adding to the complexity of the dynamic between home and diasporic identity, even when return was successful, the relationship between perceived home and diasporic individual has been far from ideal. The repatriation of former slaves from the United States to Liberia is a case in point. Some African Americans stood in opposition to the return movement. Leaders of the Philadelphia Bethel Church in 1816 branded the scheme a plan to 'dump free Negroes into the savage wilds of Africa' and charged it as being 'a circuitous route back to bondage' (Liebenow, 1969: 9). For those that did return, many had already achieved a modest independent status in the US and they returned not as impoverished returnees but as settlers. The reason for their return was a rejection of a situation that denied them full membership in American society (Liebenow, 1969: 15). Lott Carey, a Baptist preacher who was one of the first settlers, was enthusiastic about the move. His position is indicative of the manner in which an essentialised form of identity comes part and parcel with an essentialised notion of home. In explaining his desire to return, Carey maintained that 'I am an African. I wish to go to a country where I shall be estimated by my merits, not by my complexion; and I feel bound to labour for the suffering of my race' (Liebenow, 1969: 9). Many of these settlers, however, were unable to extract themselves from the stereotypes of Africa and Africans founded in the nineteenth century by Whites in the United States. Many new arrivals took pains to reproduce American culture on an alien shore, stubbornly clinging to the subtle differences that set them apart from the tribal 'savages'. (Liebenow, 1969: 15). There was no ingathering of Africa's 'lost children' and the Americo-Liberians soon became colonialists – many refused to learn the local language, monopolised political power and even re-established slavery (Robinson, 1994, Cohen, 1997: 37,

West, 1970: 304-305). It was not then (nor is it today) unusual to hear tribal people refer to the Americo-Liberians as 'white' people (Liebenow, 1969: 15).

While Liberia was far from the promised land, this did not prevent many Black intellectuals and political leaders outside Africa from championing it as an island of hope in a sea of racial discrimination and colonial domination. The division between the views of diasporic Africans over the return movement to Liberia is illustrative of the different conceptions of home within the group and the way in which its different understandings underpin the way identity is constructed.[10] The division between diasporic Africans over the return movement is also illustrative of how not all diasporic Africans saw Liberia or Africa as an actual physical site. For many, home was where they were. In addition, as demonstrated by the comparative success of Rastafarianism over Garveyism, a vaguer less essentialised notion of home is often more successful at generating a more sustainable diasporic identity. By being vague about home, a diasporic identity can be extended to as well as sustained by a larger number of diverse people.

Despite these differences, however, the concept of home remains key for diasporic individuals to identify with one another. Described by Stuart Hall,

> But whether [Africa] is, in the sense, an origin of our displacement, unchanged by four hundred years of displacement, dismemberment, transportation, to which we could in any final and literal sense, return, is more open to doubt. The original "Africa" is no longer there. It too has been transformed. History is, in that sense, irreversible. We must not collude with the West which, precisely, "normalises" and appropriates Africa by freezing it into some timeless zone of the "primitive, unchanging past." Africa must at last be reckoned with.... But it cannot in any simple sense be merely recovered. It belongs irrevocably, for us, to what Edward Said once called an "imaginative geography and history".... Our belongingness to it constitutes

> what Benedict Anderson calls "an imagined community." To this "Africa", ... we can't literally go home again (Hall, 1996: 217).

There are many 'Africas' and although they are constructed by those in the diaspora from many different locations, contexts and subjectivities, these 'Africas' – in addition to the experience of colonialism and slavery – is one key reason how and why diasporic Africans are able to feel connected to one another (Rahier, 2001: 275). With regard to Liberalism 1 and 2, this fluctuating conception of home suggests that both theories may have focussed too much on essentialised diasporic Africans moments such as Garveyism, the Liberia return movement and particular elements of Rastafarianism in their understanding of difference. By focussing primarily on a specific moment of diasporic African identity where the diasporic identity articulated is predominantly hostile and nonnegotiable, both theories view difference between groups as inherently antagonistic, thus requiring a polity to be difference-blind (re: Liberalism 1) or difference sensitive (Liberalism 2). However, seen in the statements by Ralph Ellison, the actions of many in their refusal to 'return' to Liberia and in Du Bois' desire to find a balance between his African and American self, members of a diaspora need not be in conflict with other groups of a polity. Instead, many seek to resolve the difficulties experienced in the place they currently reside, rather than return 'home'.

5.5 Concluding Remarks

The purpose of this second episode of diaspora presented here has been to illustrate (1) the varying nature of diasporic identity and (2) the accompanying alterable conception of home for such an identity. By means of a review of both involuntary

and voluntary movement of Africans pre-manumission, the first section of the chapter (Section 5.1) showed that even though the experience of slavery has had a large impact on the history of diasporic Africans, the diasporic experience should not be understood in a purely negative context. As it was shown, a significant proportion of their dispersal across the globe was also voluntary and the resulting experience was positive. Nonetheless, although the original dispersal was not entirely negative, this is not to say that its trauma had no effect on the articulation of diasporic African identity. In the second section (Section 5.2), the predominant negative stereotypes surrounding Africans and Africa were discussed in order to better appreciate how these stereotypes encountered played a considerable part in shaping diasporic African identity. Following from this, through a discussion on two differing conceptions of Negritude, the third section (Section 5.3) demonstrated that the concept of 'identity as variation' is applicable to the diasporic Africans. Reflected in social movements such as Garveyism, diasporic African identity has been articulated in both a more essentialised sense as well as a more dynamic sense in, for example, the work of Du Bois. Finally, corresponding with the diasporic Chinese, it was shown in Section 5.4 that the concept of home for diasporic Africans varies according to the identity articulated and that it plays a key role in shaping the character of the diasporic identity created. In addition, an understanding of the role of home in the construction of a diasporic identity plays an important role in framing a policy on multiculturalism. If diasporas are not presented as discontented dispersed communities awaiting redemption by returning to their 'motherland', their relationship with other members of a polity need not be understood as hostile from the outset. Instead, the relationship between diasporas and their hosts may be seen as more multifaceted and positive. Demonstrated through the varied conceptions of

home, members of the African diaspora are less threatening, less problematic and less hostile in their relations with fellow members of their polity than Liberalism 1 and 2 may hold.

As forwarded in Chapter One (Section 1.2), the three diasporic experiences presented in this thesis are episodic in quality as each episode further develops the insights of the previous. Thus, this section concludes with an analysis of the impact the experience of the diasporic Africans has on the following: (1) the diasporic experience, and (2) the difficulties faced by Liberalism 1 and 2 brought to light by the experience of diasporas. I argue here that, similar to the diasporic Chinese experience, the term diaspora may be successfully applied to the experience of Africans outside of Africa. The term effectively captures their experiences and it also presents a perspective of the experience disregarded by other approaches. Following from this, in accord with Chapter Four, the issues highlighted by the diasporic African experience are related to the arguments levelled against the long-term success of Liberalism 1 and 2.

(1) ***The diasporic experience*:** Building on the experience of the diasporic Chinese, this chapter on the African diaspora has illustrated how the diasporic Chinese experience is not an exclusive case. The experience of the Chinese revealed that diasporic identity is contextually influenced and identity is not static but may vary according to the subjectivities of different individuals. In the same way, African diasporic identification has waxed and waned over time depending upon individual circumstance. Those of African decent outside Africa though all possessing the potential to identify with the diaspora have not necessarily done so. Diasporic identification is both a process and a condition, a process of balancing

one's routes and roots coupled with a condition of displacement that allows for the process to take place. Diasporas have histories and as noted by James Clifford,

> involves dwelling, maintaining communities, having collective homes away from home.... Diaspora discourse articulates, or bends together, both roots *and* routes to construct.... alternative public spheres, forms of community consciousness and solidarity that maintain identifications outside national time/space in order to live inside, with a difference (Clifford, 1997: 251).

This diasporic identification may be one of many other possibilities on offer to an individual but it would be a great stretch of the imagination to hold that there is a united invariable worldwide African consciousness. St. Clair Drake expresses the diasporic potential well by maintaining that

> with mobs screaming in Notting Hill and Brixton "keep Britain White," with Chinese men attacking African students for consorting with Chinese girls.... [w]orldwide black consciousness is a psychological reserve that can be mobilized to achieve local ends as well as to aid others.... (Drake, 1993: 455).

In addition, it is important not to overstate the negative aspects of the diaspora. Despite the negative connotations conjured up by diaspora, overemphasis on the negative obscures the true picture by leaving any discussion of the African diaspora perpetually framed in a negative context. As seen with the return movement of Garveyism and the mixed feeling on 'returning' to Liberia, not all those of African descent felt an overwhelming compulsion to return home. For those that were unconvinced by Garvey, their identity and, likewise, their conception of home was more fluid than the one offered by Garvey. Some may have assimilated whilst

others would have struggled with Du Bois' double consciousness, seeking a manner in which they could retain the identities of both home and host by balancing their experience of being from somewhere whilst also being from somewhere else.

Having rejected both William Safran's checklist system or Robin Cohen's typological approach to understanding diasporas, the previous chapters have also argued against understanding diasporas as a condition experienced by a rigid unchanging collective. Instead, the term's meaning as a signifier for a condition as well as a process has been emphasised.[11] For example, this would require a shift from viewing the Africans outside of Africa as part of the singular unit of the 'African diaspora' but instead focus on the 'diasporic African' experience. This does not necessitate a jettisoning of the historical production of diasporas as it is not an attempt to ignore the historical connotations of the term with its feelings and associations. Instead, what is argued for is that one's history merely offers an option to individuals to participate in a diasporic experience. However, that does not necessarily lead to the option being taken up. This ensures that what is identified as a diasporic experience is not too broad, thus avoiding a situation where everyone of African descent outside Africa is considered part of the diaspora whilst allowing an understanding of diaspora that is sensitive to the fluctuating nature of diasporic identification.

Illustrated by the role of the Black Star Line in Garveyism and also the way transport links created in Equino's time but still in existence today have led to the creation of the Black Atlantic spanning North America, the Caribbean and Britain, this diasporic identity is negotiated and facilitated through diasporic transnational networks. In the words of Adam McKeown, 'networks are transnational institutions, organisations, and personal connections that made migration into a viable economic

strategy and stable system for the circulation of goods, people, information and profit' (McKeown, 1999). Diasporas are a community whose perceived territory exists within its own links and flows. Despite being outside the narrative of nationalism with its desire to tie identity down spatially, members of a diaspora are not completely detached from nationalist narratives as they continue to require such narratives to construct their diasporic identity. As sharing in the diasporic moment requires being in-between places, where diasporas typically conceive themselves of being in-between are competing nationalist narratives.

A contemporary example is the role played by Ghanaian churches and ethnic associations (Akeyeampong, 2000: 209-213). With the popularity of Pentecostalism in Ghana, the Ghanaian Pentecostal church has set up international branches that have facilitated the movement of ideas, people and commodities. The would-be immigrants begin their journey by praying for the successful application of a visa in one of the many Pentecostal prayer camps in Ghana and the successful immigrants are eased into their host society through the networks of the many international branches of the church. Membership in the church provides security in an alien and sometimes hostile foreign environment and the church network serves as an information conduit by which jobs, housing, communication with bureaucrats and news from home is transmitted (Akeyeampong, 2000: 209). Ghanaian ethnic associations overseas act in a similar manner as Chinese clan associations, functioning as cultural and benevolent institutions that provide social networks and services similar to that of the churches but with the addition of recreating Ghanaian culture abroad. In London, a major hub of the Ghanaian diaspora, it is possible for a Ghanaian to rent from a Ghanaian landlord, be employed by a fellow Ghanaian,

maintain a Ghanaian diet and socialise in exclusively Ghanaian circles (Akyeampong, 2000: 210).

Within diasporic networks, there is a perpetual tension between 'where you are from' and 'where you are at'. Just as in any other forms of community, these networks generate their own narratives to make sense of themselves and their experiences. This results in the creation of a culture that privileges neither home nor host. Diasporic communities are not permanent as there is a persistent mediation between separation and entanglement, of living here and remembering/desiring another place (Clifford, 1997: 255). The Ghanaians in the examples above are not trapped within their diasporic identity but have opted into it, thus leaving open the option of opting out through assimilation or return. When they do participate in these networks, they share in a diasporic moment that creates a commonality between them. By participating in such networks, Ghanaians celebrate and *recreate* Ghanaian culture in a foreign land. As observed by Pashington Obeng, many would not have celebrated such customs if they were not abroad (Obeng, 1998: 336-337). Hence, diasporic identity is an exercise in selective memory wrapped up in a complex process of assimilation, resistance and negotiation.

To draw on Stuart Hall's example, a helpful way to envisage diasporic identity is through its similarity with reggae music (Hall, 1995: 14). Reggae is a product of the juggling of tradition with current circumstance. It is a music form that arose from the 1960s that involves the preservation of African drumming traditions and also the absorption, fusion and crossing of a number of other musical forms. Its propagation was through deeply tribal instrumentation, a recording studio, a sound system and, although Hall does not mention this, an international music industry. (Hall, 1995: 14). Diasporic identity is in tune with this as it is a product of one's

current situation stemming from a combination of the cultural tools at hand and the circumstances that one faces. It is neither a *tabula rasa* that may be filled out in any manner nor is it completely set in stone. Diasporic identity is developed from invention and re-representation limited by historical experience. Like the role of the international music industry in the development of reggae, the site of development, diffusion, negotiation and balancing for diasporic identities is found in diasporic transnational networks.

(2) ***The difficulties faced by Liberalism 1 and 2 brought to light by the experience of diasporas*****:** Owing to Liberalism 1 and 2's essentialist understanding of identity (Chapter 2, Section 2.2.2), the issues exposed by the experience of the African diaspora that is reflected on these two forms of multiculturalism are as follows: firstly, the variability of diasporic identity emphasises how both theories approach multiculturalism in an unduly pessimistic manner; secondly, a difference-blind approach demanded by Liberalism 1 may not always achieve long-term civility between groups; and thirdly, the boundaries between groups are often more blurred and fluid than portrayed in Liberalism 2.

With regard to the manner in which both Liberalism 1 and 2 approach the management of difference, the variability of diasporic African identity illustrates how both Liberalism 1 and 2 possess an unduly cynical understanding of group difference. Both positions to a large extent reject the prospect of different groups intermingling in a positive manner owing to an understanding of inter-group differences as static and unavoidably antagonistic. Exposed by their approach to the management of difference, Liberalism 1's belief in the inevitable conflict that arises from differences leads to a strategy that aims to disregard difference whilst allowing

groups to pursue their own ends under the rule of law. For Liberalism 2, the best response to the inevitable conflict is to keep groups apart by identifying and protecting them. However, if identities are revisable over time, this suggests that inter-group differences need not be one of unavoidable persistent conflict. On occasion there may be moments of antagonism but such moments should not be regarded as either eternal or insurmountable as conflict is only one of the many forms of inter-group relationships (Chapter 2, Section 2.2.2). As seen in the discussion on diasporic African identity and the concept of home, not everyone in the diaspora was and is of the belief that conflict is inevitable and with no possibility of resolution. For every individual like Garvey who believed that conflict was inevitable there have been individuals like Du Bois and Ralph Ellison with their determination to seek an amicable resolution to their double consciousness. However, due to the pessimistic foundation underlying both Liberalism 1 and 2, the beliefs of individuals such as Garvey are seen to represent the entirety of diasporic Africans.

In reference to Liberalism 1, the diasporic African experience has demonstrated that the long-term success of any policy on multiculturalism requires more than the disregard of inter-group differences. Even though differences are fleeting, that does not suggest that differences can be ignored. The difficulty faced by Liberalism 1 in the development of long-term accord is exposed when essentialised forms of difference and identity surface through inter-group conflict. As observed in the diasporic potential identified by St. Clair Drake when black communities are pushed into a corner and also in the reaction of African Americans in East Harlem during the Italian invasion of Ethiopia, a difference-blind approach where there is little attempt to foster inter-group understanding can often erupt in

sudden conflict. For a policy of multiculturalism to succeed in the long-term, there ought to be more social glue to hold the social fabric of a polity together other than the enforcement of the rule of law.

Finally, as the experiences of the diasporic Africans have shown, it is very difficult to identify cultural groups into the distinct compartments demanded by Liberalism 2. The African diasporic experience reveals that identity is better understood as variation where it alters within the parameters in place until the moment of its articulation when it is momentarily hardened. By identifying groups, Liberalism 2 unconsciously calcifies fluid and shifting difference and it also deprives individuals the space to revise their identity. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine how all the difference experiences discussed in this chapter can be grouped together under one static understanding of diasporic African identity. Membership to diasporas is in too much flux to achieve a comprehensive and lasting identification of specific groups in order to secure the subsequent protection of its members as demanded by Liberalism 2.

Endnotes for Chapter Five:

[1] This paper as well as others presented at the conference may be found in Ranger, TO. (ed.) (1968). *Emerging Themes of African History*, London: Heinemann Educational Books.

[2] For examples of the usage of the term as a signifier and/or an analytical tool, see Harris, JE. (ed.) (1993). *Global Dimensions of the African Diaspora*, Washington, DC: Howard University Press, Jollah, A and Maizlish, SE. (eds.) (1996). *The African Diaspora*, Texas A & M University Press, Segal, R. (1995). *The Black Diaspora*, London: Faber and Faber. and Thompson, VB. (1987). *The Making of the Black Diaspora in the Americas 1441-1900*, London: Longman.

[3] For a more in-depth analysis on the legacy of craniology and craniometry, see Stephen, JG. (1981). *The Mismeasurement of Man*, New York: WW Norton, Pg. 108-12.

[4] According to Kipling, the White man's burden was to

> Send forth the best ye breed -
> Go bind your sons to exile
> To serve your captives' need;
> To wait, in heavy harness
> On fluttered folk and wild -
> Your new caught, sullen peoples,
> Half-devil and half-child (Kipling, 1992: 127)

[5] To come to terms with and to better analyse these differences, Earl Lewis has suggested dividing the African diaspora into sub-groups such as class, colour, religion and gender in order to situate 'black life in a series of overlapping diasporas' (Lewis, 1995: 768). Although this may be helpful in understanding different aspects of the African diaspora, it runs the risk of being overwhelmed in detail resulting in the obscuration of the bigger picture. The African diaspora may be divided into a blinding array of sub-groups but they continue to interact with each other under the larger banner of diasporic Africans thus pointing towards the need to also find commonalities within their differences

[6] Although their individual work will be used in this essay to be representative of the differing ways in which diasporic African identity is understood, this by no means suggests that the views of either Du Bois or Garvey are uniformly associated as such. Opinions differ on the pigeonholing of them. This should not be seen as a problem for the argument to be made as it merely highlights the constant interpretation and reinterpretation of diasporic identity. For differing conceptions of Du Bois, see Robinson, CJ. (1994). 'WEB Du Bois and Black Sovereignty' in *Imagining Home: Class Culture and Nationalism in the African Diaspora*, Sidney J. Lemelle and Robin D. G. Kelly (eds.), London: Verso and Bruce Jr., DD. (1992). 'WEB Du Bois and the Idea of Black Consciousness', *American Literature*, Vol. 64, No. 2, Pg. 299-309. For an example of both men being branded champions of Afrocentrism, see Gerald E. (1997). 'Understanding Afrocentrism: Why Blacks Dream of a World Without Whites', *Civilisation*, July/August 1995, reprinted in *Race and Ethnic Relations 97/98*, 7th Edition.

[7] Garvey's countertextual resistance to the dominant negative stereotype of Africans and Africa was not unique. From the mid-nineteenth century, diasporic Africans, especially African-Americans, produced a substantial amount of work citing Egypt, Nubia, Ethiopia and other African civilisations as proof of African worth and as a reply to negative stereotyping (Howe, 1998: 35-58).

[8] Garvey's view on a link between the status and treatment of Africans in diaspora to the status of Africa has its support, albeit when imposed on the United States, in the work on social stratification by Bendix and Lipset (1958) and Kerbo (1984). Both argue that the status of the nation of origin within the global system, both real and imagined, has an effect on the treatment and status of groups from those states. For an example, Henry (1999) argues that the rise in stature of Japanese and

Chinese Americans and not the African Americans in the United States is due to corresponding rise in stature of Japan, China and Taiwan and the continued weak status of African states.

[9] For more on the impact and influence of Garveyism, see Vincent, TG. (1971). *Black Power and the Garvey Movement*, Berkeley, California: Ramparts Press, Chapter 9 and Cronon, ED. (1955). *Black Moses: The Story of Marcus Garvey and the Universal Negro Improvement Association*, Madison, Wisconsin; London: University of Wisconsin Press, Chapter 8.

[10] Beyond the role of home in constructing a diasporic identity amongst a diaspora whose members may share a package of similar and dissimilar experiences and histories, returning home may narrow the identificational space offered to diasporic Africans. When Chuck D, a social commentator and musician from the United States visited Ghana, he describes a similar feeling of uneasiness felt by the mothers of the *Joy Luck Club* who returned to China (D, 1997: 161). He was surprised that he had

> never seen so many black people.... Over there you have to prove you're Black, you can't just say, "Yo, yo, give a brother a break, I'm Black." Everybody is Black. There's black on black on black, blue black, black on top of black. You can't just say, 'Yo, I'm your brother,' you have to prove that you are a brother (D, 1997: 161).

His experience is particularly interesting as it reveals how 'returning' to a specific location narrows the identificational avenues open to diasporic Africans. What is meant here is that there are a multitude of commonalities that may be constructed outside of Africa as there are 'others' to define oneself against. However, by being in Africa, the 'other' is removed, thus making the construction of commonality more problematic.

[11] William Safran and Robin Cohen's arguments need not be reiterated here as it has been carried out in the previous chapters. For Safran's position, see William, S. (1991). 'Diasporas in modern societies: myths of homeland and return', *Diaspora*, Vol. 1, No. 1, Pg. 83-99. For Cohen's, see Cohen, R. (1997). *Global Diasporas: An Introduction*, London: UCL Press.

Chapter Six: The Jewish Diaspora

> If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law that are written down in this book.... [t]he Lord shall scatter thee among all the people, from one end of the earth unto the other.... [a]nd among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing eyes, and sorrow of mind.... [a]nd thy life shall hand in doubt before thee; and thou shall fear day and night and shall have none assurance of thy life (Deuteronomy, 28: 58-66)
>
> By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows of the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, Sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land? (Psalms 137: 1-4).

According to the *OED*, the word diaspora has its origins in the Greek translation of the Bible hereafter conjoining its use to the Jewish experience. As captured by the quote above, the idea of diaspora in the Bible is the experience of being displaced and dispersed from one's homeland whilst being filled with emotions of sorrow, hurt, insecurity and fear. The concept of diaspora is so firmly tied to the Jewish experience that one observer has described them as representing *the* 'ideal type' of

diaspora (Safran, 1991: 84). However, as discussed in Chapter One (Section 1.2), the choice of sequence in which the episodes of diaspora are discussed in the thesis has been driven by a desire to offer an alternative perspective to common understandings of diasporas that tend to consider the Jewish experience as the paradigmatic example. I argue that this different approach to understanding diasporas is needed in order to break away from the overly negative connotation of the term illustrated in the Bible and subsequently, in the *OED*'s definition. To achieve this goal, Chapters Four and Five have analysed the diasporic Chinese and African experience prior to that of the Jews. As the episodes of the Chinese and African diaspora have shown, the experience of diaspora has not always been a negative one. Admittedly, there have been historical moments that have been marked by hurt, loss and trauma but the overall experiences of both diasporas have also been tapered by many positive experiences. In addition, two other important points have been demonstrated through the two previous episodes. Firstly, the experiences of the Chinese and Africans in diaspora have shown that the concept of diaspora as characterised in this thesis may be deployed coherently to describe a specific social collective. Secondly, their experience of 'identity as variation' suggests that Liberalism 1 and 2 may have severe difficulties in promoting long-term accord within a multicultural polity.

Building on these findings, I shall now turn to the final episode of the Jewish diaspora in order to argue two points: (1) the term diaspora possesses clear enough conceptual perimeters to be used coherently to identify and describe a distinctly Jewish social collective; and (2) with such an understanding of the term, it is possible to employ the experience of diasporas to highlight the difficult issues Liberalism 1 and 2 face in attaining long-term harmony between members of a

multicultural polity. To do so, this chapter is divided into three sections. The first section of this chapter (Section 6.1) discusses the competing conceptions of Jewish diasporic identity in order to emphasise its non-essentialist nature. This involves a discussion on the three dominant ways in which Jewish identity has been articulated, namely, as an ethnicity, a religion and as a construct by non-Jews. Following from this, the second section (Section 6.2) discusses the role the concept of home plays for the Jewish diaspora. Employing the concepts of Zionism, Territorialism and Bundism, the section emphasises how the concept of 'home' in diaspora is a reflection of the desire of its members to live in a community that can accommodate and co-exist with difference. Its location is dependent upon the identity constructed and it may be 'relocated' to correspond with the identity articulated. In the final section of this chapter (Section 6.3), the history of interaction between the Jews and Gentiles is surveyed to emphasise how Jews and Gentiles for the most part have happily co-existed with each other.[1] It was only when differences was petrified into oppositional poles that there was tension and hostility. Therefore, in order to guard against the petrifaction of oppositional identities, a successful policy on multiculturalism should do more than either ignore difference, as proposed by Liberalism 1, or attempt to identify and protect specific groups, as forwarded by Liberalism 2.

6.1 Jewish Identity: Ethnicity, Judaism and a Condition

In support of the argument that identity is best understood as variation, this section discusses three variants of Jewish identity: Jewish ethnicity, Judaism in its various forms, or Jewish-ness as an identity created by Gentiles.[2] Due to the multiple

variants of Jewish diasporic identity, some analysts maintain that the loss of a distinctly identifiable Jewish-ness will ultimately lead to the end of the Jews as a distinct people (Wasserstein, 1997, Friedmann, 1967, Wertheimer, 1997). However, as this section illustrates, this position may be erroneous. The Jewish diaspora has not been unified through time and place by an essential core quality. Instead, similar to the discussion on the Chinese and African diasporic identity, the various permutations of Jewish identity have been in existence for as long as the Jews and this variability is a testament to the resilience of Jewish identity rather than a weakness.

In this section, it is argued that regardless of the form of analysis taken, Jewish identity and identities in general should neither be understood as possessing an essential core nor as an open-ended free-floating concept. In accordance with what was revealed by the discussion on diasporic Chinese and African identity, diasporic Jewish identity is a creation of a mixture of (1) the possibilities on offer - what has been said before affects what can be said in the present, which will have a bearing on what can be said later and (2) the opportunities for self-expression presented in one's external environment. Therefore, Jewish diasporic identity is a combination of both the will of the agent and the avenues of expression presented by structure and history.

Although the human desire to be part of a larger collective has undoubtedly been a ubiquitous feature of human existence, the way that one relates to the collective chosen is in constant flux. The desire to be part of a collective coupled with the large number of choices on offer is articulated rather well in a conversation between two characters in the television series *Northern Exposure* (Benmayor and Skontes, 1994: 10) Speaking are Joel Fleischman (below as 'F'), a Jew from New

York trapped in an isolated Alaskan town, and Ed Chigliak (below as 'ED'), a Native American:

F: What does belonging to your own tribe mean to you?...

ED: Well, I was raised by the tribe, but since I didn't have parents I was passed around a lot.

F: I never really thought about it, belonging to a tribe. I belong to the Jewish tribe, so to speak, but I'm also an American, you know? But what does that mean? I mean, is there an American tribe? More like a zillion special interest groups. In my own case, I'm a New Yorker, I'm a Republican, a Knicks fan.... Maybe we've out grown tribes, you know, the global village thing. Telephones, faxes, CNN. I mean, basically, we all belong to the same tribe.

ED: That's true. But you can't hang out with 5 billion people!

F: That's a good point.

What this exchange captures is the tension between deciding what collective one belongs to when having to make a decision. When forced to articulate the tribe that he belongs to, Fleischman is unable to make up his mind and is forced to rely on a global homogenous construct that he is uneasy with. In this conversation, Ed does not have to say what specific tribe he belongs to but nonetheless expresses the need to find a tribe to 'hang out' with. For Ed, to be part of a greater collective in order to 'hang out' with others is a necessary tool with which one can make sense of the world.

Just like Fleischman, the diasporic Jews abroad have multiple ways of identifying themselves. The one that is chosen is influenced by a myriad of factors. As noted in Chapter Two, identity has no cut-off point – every cut-off is 'strategic' and arbitrary and thus, its articulation is an attempt at strategic essentialism (Hall, 1997: 35). Like the diasporic Africans and Chinese, a discussion on Jewish identity

and the cohesiveness of their diaspora requires an understanding of the divisions within the group and the ability of the group to remain cohesive despite divisions. It would be comfortable to perceive the Jewish diaspora as possessing an organic unity that transcends time and space – with a core identity that has remained unchanged in essence despite the historical and geographical guises worn and shed by it. This view, however, would be difficult to justify. An essentialist understanding of identity is perhaps the bulwark of any successful diaspora – what Stuart Hall has termed 'strategic essentialism'- but it is of little use in trying to understand reality. For a Jew in the ghettos of Eastern Europe, his kin in Shanghai was no different from him. The 'real' Jew is always the familiar one. This representation of fellow Jews was aided by the fact that time and place was not as compressed as this current period of history. Stories of Jews in exotic locations around the world may have come from travellers, but their differences were often forgotten as they were reinvented into more familiar pictures (Halkin, 1998, Pg. 53).

In order to illustrate Jewish-ness as variation, the remainder of this first section is divided into three parts. The section begins with a discussion of Jewish-ness as an ethnicity (Section 6.1.1). This involves a discussion of the Jews as an ethnic group as conceived in the Bible. The second part of this section (Section 6.1.2) analyses the different forms of Judaism and the part the religion has played in Jewish identity formation. Judaism has over time shifted from a national religion to a composite of several denominations. Finally, the role of the 'Other' in constructing Jewish-ness is discussed (Section 6.1.3). Non-Jews have played a substantial role in defining the parameters in which Jewish-ness can be expressed and lived. Following the work of Jean-Paul Sartre and the thoughts of Theodore Herzl, the limits of one's ability to define oneself will be shown.

6.1.1 *Jewish-ness as Ethnicity*

In discussing the various conceptions of Jewish identity, it is helpful to begin with the Biblical account of the origins of the Jewish people. Regardless of whether one traces the formation of the Jews as a people back to Abraham, or to Moses receiving the Ten Commandments or to the completion of the Hebrew Bible, the Bible has been a major historical guide for the Jews to understand their history and identity.[3] A summary of the traditional Biblical account of the beginnings of the Jewish people is by no means simple. However, no account of the Jewish diaspora and Jewish identity can begin without considering the biblical account of the manner in which the Jews as a people came into existence.

Exercising some authorial discretion in summarising Jewish traditional history, it is not too far-fetched to hold that the very origin of the Jews as a social collective was one born in diaspora. According to the Bible, the first Jew was Abraham who was born in southern Mesopotamia and was instructed by God to migrate to the land of Canaan. Thus, the very founding of the Jewish people was outside of what was to be considered their home – '[a]nd I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan' (Genesis 17: 8). Moreover, perhaps indicative of the variable location of home for those of a diaspora, the exact location of their new home as bequeathed by God of the Bible was by no means clear. The quote from Genesis 17: 8 comes after an earlier one in the same book where a much larger proportion of land was promised:

> [t]o your descendents I give this land from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates, the land of the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the

> Kadmonities, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites (Genesis, 15: 1-6).

Of Abraham's immediate descendents, only his son Isaac never left Canaan. Abraham's grandson, Jacob, who was later renamed Israel, as a young man sojourned for twenty years, returned to Canaan and finally spent his last days in Egypt. Abraham's great-grandson Joseph was taken forcibly to Egypt and remained there. He later brought his family along which expanded to form a league of tribes whilst in Egypt. It is the B'nai Israel (Children of Jacob/Israel) who left Egypt in an exodus led by Moses. During this exodus, Moses acting as God's conduit established a common law for the tribes that led to the formation of a full blown polity at the foot of Mount Sinai through a national covenant and the introduction of a regularised judicial structure and political organisation.

Regardless of the historical accuracy of the Biblical account, it is an interesting embarkation point for any analysis of the Jewish diaspora as it brings to light the ambiguity surrounding diasporic identity as well as the concept of home for those of the diaspora. From the Biblical account of Jewish identity, it is not entirely clear how one becomes a Jew. Jewish identity begins with Abraham and is adopted by some of his family. It then becomes a league of tribes and evolves into a nation and finally, into a state. Through this process, kinship becomes a necessary but not sufficient condition through which one attains membership into the group first identified as Hebrew then Israelites and Jews (Gitelman, 1998: 114). Not all of Abraham's descendants were Jewish. Jacob/Israel had brothers but not all became Hebrew. Thus, from the very genesis of the Jews as a people, identity and identification contains an element of haziness by alluding towards an element of choice in respect to the adoption of Jewish-ness. In addition, a distinctive

characteristic of Jewish-ness is the fusion of religion and ethnicity (Gitelman, 1998: 115). This fusion is exemplified by the concept surrounding the celebration of Passover (Orr, 1994: 12-13). Passover is a feast commemorating God's 'passing over' of Jewish homes three thousand years ago in Egypt when he smote all the first-born Egyptian males. The ceremonial meal – the Seder – is seen to symbolise the 'birthday party' of the Jews as an ethnic group inseparable from its religion (Orr, 1994: 13).

There are four vital elements to this fusion contained in Genesis 15: a specific religion; common ancestry; evolution to nationhood; and possession of a territory. From the earliest days, the Jews defined themselves not only as a religious group but also one of matrilineal descent. Consequently, those who adopt the Jewish faith become part of the Jewish people *and* those whose mothers are Jews are also considered to be Jewish. This leads to a situation where one could be ethnically Jewish and an atheist whilst closing off the possibility for anyone else to be a Jew other than through religious conversion.[4] Moreover, added to this cocktail of identification is the attachment to a particular territory. It is through this attachment to a particular territory that the fluidity of diasporic identification discussed in the previous chapters comes to the fore. As noted above, the exact location of this territory given by God to the Jews is far from precise. Thus, coupled with the fact that the identification of Jewish-ness is far from an exact science, the Biblical account of the origins of the Jews also throws up ambiguity surrounding where exactly this diaspora considers home.

As a result, the Biblical account of the Jews as a diasporic people is testament to the idea that identity is best understood as variation. The variable diasporic identity as exemplified by the Jews of the Bible is specific and yet

paradoxically open to interpretation and reinterpretation. Furthermore, though 'home' is a theme that binds the people, it may be multiply centred as they need not necessarily agree on where it essentially lies. The next section now turns to Judaism in order to highlight its multiple denominations as well as to argue that Judaism's inability to act as the essential quality of Jewish-ness further supports the conception of identity as variation.

6.1.2 *Jewish-ness as Judaism*

As noted above, the fusion between Jewish-ness as an ethnicity and Jewish-ness as the practise of Judaism has often led the latter to be seen as *the* defining characteristic of Jewish identity and identification (Orr, 1994: 9). The practise of Judaism is often seen to be the essential quality of Jewish-ness owing to the way it pervades the lives of its followers. For example, regardless of one's Jewish denomination – be it Reform, Conservative, Orthodox or others – all have to adhere to the religious rules known as the *mitzvoth* for their conduct in life. The *mitzvoth* (in the singular, *mitzvah*) not only determines the time and conduct of religious worship but it also regulates ordinary everyday life – placing limits and restrictions on one's diet, clothing, sexual relations, and so on. Its practise transforms the banality of everyday tasks into a religious way of life. For example, when you wash your hands, it is carried out of a respect for God rather than for your own hygiene, thus conveying religious significance to a routine act. In sum, those who practise the *mitzvoth* conduct their everyday life as an act of worship, a worship that is unrestricted to a particular place and/or time. Furthermore, Judaism has a set of laws, or *halakhah*, that specifies a completely separate rhythm of life from non-Jews

(Elazar, 1986: 213). *Halakhah* emphasises the organisation of time and obligates Jews to follow those rhythms that include specific times for study and prayer, the Sabbath, holy days, festivals and celebrations at representative festivals. This regulatory and all permeating nature of Judaism is often taken to be the secure anchor to which Jewish-ness is fastened. This has led one observer to hold that Judaism's followers 'have no urge to define their own identity. They never ask themselves whether they are Jewish and what is the meaning of their Jewish-ness.... They have a totally secure cultural identity, known to themselves and to others as Jewish' (Orr, 1994: 9).

The umbilical tie to Jewish identity by Judaism may be seen in two ways. Firstly, there is the manner in which those that practise it under overwhelming pressure and persecution have defended it and, secondly, its use as a means to 'fill out' the supposed hollowness of contemporary Jewish identity. One of the more famous examples of the importance of Judaism's role in Jewish-ness may be seen in the manner in which individuals such as Moses Mendelssohn amongst others chose to remodel rather than abandon it to suit the demands placed on Jews during emancipation (Mendelssohn, 1983). Working during the period of emancipation, a period that began in 1790 when the French government gave the Sephardim Jews full citizenship, Mendelssohn was driven by the desire to demonstrate how the Jews could remain attached to their faith whilst becoming part of European culture. As such, he aimed to fashion Judaism as a civil religion devoid of illiberal doctrines and theocratic tendencies along similar lines to the Judeo-Christianity of Spinoza and the Christianity of Locke (Arkush, 1994: 254-274).

Another manner in which Judaism plays an important role in Jewish identity may be seen in the way there are now arguments for the celebration of Judaism as a

means to retain Jewish uniqueness (Finkielkraut, 1994, Wertheimer, 1997). After World War Two and the Holocaust, accommodation of the Jews in modern society has been successful to a such degree that Alain Finkielkraut, a French Jew born in 1948, has argued that the post-war French Jews live in bad faith and are 'imaginary Jews' (Finkielkraut, 1994: 15) as they have maintained Jewish historical identity but with 'no real provenance' (Finkielkraut, 1994: 96). Post-war Jews, Finkielkraut claims, have enjoyed 'all the profit but none of the risk' as post-war Jews have identified themselves with a people who had unjustly suffered in order to give themselves a sense of moral superiority and distinction without, however, personally experiencing the suffering (Finkielkraut, 1994: 12). The result of this is one where, unlike their parents who were Jews on the inside and men on the outside, 'we're Jews without.... for the public, for the outside world, while within, we're like just like everybody else, followers of the same styles and prey to the same fascinations, without any cultural specificity' (Finkielkraut, 1980: 96). Exemplifying the role that Judaism plays in maintaining Jewish-ness and Jewish identity, Finkielkraut argues that in a more pluralistic and accommodating France, the Jews have to use Judaism to fill the void that has led to their 'inauthenticity': 'I value Judaism today because it comes to me from the outside and brings me more than I contain' (Finkielkraut, 1980: 176).

From the way in which the *mitzvoth* regulates everyday life for those that practise Judaism and as the views of Mendelssohn and Finkielkraut illustrate, Judaism plays an important role in the formation and preservation of Jewish-ness. However, the divisions illustrates how Judaism fails to provide the essential quality that makes a person Jewish. Judaism, corresponding to what has been discussed on diasporic identity, is amenable to perpetual reinterpretation. Although the practise of

Judaism in its various forms allows an individual to be part of a greater Jewish community and is seemingly unproblematic to identify with as well as being identifiable to the outside, Judaism is a very broad umbrella under which a multitude of conflicting forms sit uneasily together. Within Judaism itself there are disputes over what form of Judaism represents 'true' Jewish-ness. This has led to conflict and division between practitioners. For example, American Reform and Conservative Jews are not recognised by their Orthodox counterparts in the United States and Israel (Wertheimer, 1997: 24). The difficulties within mainstream Jewish denominations surrounding the limits placed on interpretation and adaptation before a denomination can no longer be considered part of Judaism are not so divisive when one considers the large number of fringe groups claiming to be a form of Judaism. An example of one of the more theologically confusing of these groups is the 'Jews for Jesus', a proselytising and syncretistic movement. The holding of Jesus by this group as the messiah runs against the grain of the very core of Judaism and has led to this group receiving strong condemnation (Wertheimer, 1997: 26). Other examples of fringe groups include Jewish Buddhists, Jewish witches and Jews that have blended their faith with that of the Native Americans.

In summary, the division between Judaism demonstrates how diasporic Jewish identity is open to persistent interpretation and reinterpretation. Despite often playing a key role in representing Jewish-ness, its various permutations indicate how there is very little in the sense of a core quality of Jewish-ness. Instead, there is a variation of Judaism that fluctuates according to different times and in different places.

6.1.3 *Jewish-ness as a Condition*

The third way in which Jewish identity has been discussed has been through the Jews' experience of anti-Semitism – it is the anti-Semite that creates the Jew (Sartre, 1995). Though historical revisionists such as Robin Cohen have sought to pull the Jewish diasporic experience out of its conventional victimised light, anti-Semitism however perceived still plays an important role in Jewish identity formation (Cohen, 1997). This understanding of Jewish-ness as a condition is a two-way process as the anti-Semite creates the Jew in order to hide his/her own fears and inadequacies stemming from an absolute necessity to exclude the 'Other'. Thus, an environment is created where Jews are given little negotiating space to be anything else outside the parameters drawn by the anti-Semite.

Jean-Paul Sartre's *Anti-Semite and Jew* (1954), written soon after the Holocaust, was at the forefront of understanding Jewish identity as a condition where Jews are viewed as the creation and victim of social aggression. Sartre's pioneering achievement was to place emphasis on the definition of the Jew from the aggressor's viewpoint. Adopting a dialectical approach, Sartre sought to discover a definable self-projected Jewish identity but he claimed to have found no uniqueness of Jewish identity (at least amongst French Jews). For Sartre, 'the Jew is one whom other men consider a Jew: that is the simple truth.... [I]t is the anti-Semite who *makes* the Jew (Sartre, 1995: 68, emphasis in the original). Therefore, the concept of the Jew is a mask alien to both the individual forced to wear it and to those who have forced it upon the bearer. Accordingly, for Sartre, the Jew becomes a collection of stereotypes for a person that is threatened by modernity. Examples of these stereotypes range from the portrayal and representation of Jews as the killers of

Christ, ugly, smelly, uncivilised, wicked, degenerates, feminine, hysterical and mad. (Steyn, 1999: 14-18). Those identified as Jews share with others only their undesirable situation, turning Jewish-ness into a shared condition (Sartre, 1954: 81). Sartre was not optimistic about the possibility of Jews to resist their condition, as 'the condition of the Jew is such that anything he does is turned against him' (Sartre, 1954: 175). Sartre's conception of Jewish-ness as a condition and creation is an important contribution to discussions on Jewish identity formation as it acknowledges the role non-Jews play in the interaction with Jews in this formation. It challenged the assimilationist liberal tendencies of the period by highlighting their blindness towards the relationships of power. Sartre's work is echoed in the views of Zionists such as Theodor Herzl. Having to face these apparently inevitable outbursts of anti-Semitism, Zionists argued that assimilation was an unobtainable dream and the only alternative was the creation of a Jewish homeland. For the Zionists, unacceptable levels of anti-Semitism and the seemingly impossible attainment of equality led them to conclude that messianic salvation had to be abandoned and matters had to be taken into their own hands. As expressed by Herzl:

> We have honestly endeavoured everywhere to merge ourselves in the social life of surrounding communities and to preserve only the faith of our fathers.... We are not been permitted to do so.... Whether we like it or not, we are now, and shall henceforth remain, a historic group with unmistakable characteristics common to us all. *We are one people – our enemies have made us one.... as repeatedly happens in history....* Yes, we are strong enough to form a state, and, indeed, a model state (Herzl, 1993: 15-27, emphasis added).

Admittedly, the degree of anti-Semitism experienced by the Jews was not uniform throughout the diaspora. It had its peaks and troughs depending on place and period. This, however, is besides the point. The lack of uniformity of the experience of anti-Semitism is secondary to the role it played in forming Jewish identity when it did occur. Not only did it help form Jewish identity, it unintentionally played a key role in support for Zionism and the creation of a Jewish state.

Following from the understanding of the nature of identity formation forwarded in Chapter Two (Section 2.2), Jewish identity springs from the interplay between those whose historical memory contains Jewish history with the external factors of those wanting to identify a person as a Jew. The historical combination of Jewish life along with the anti-Semitism and exclusion experienced by them in various places are merely the ingredients for the establishment of Jewish identity. Whether it is taken up is dependent upon the agent and the avenues of expression offered by the external environment. Thus, history combines with experience, environment and agency in the articulation of one's identity at a particular moment in time. If one's external environment is very open and offers many avenues of expression, an individual is 'spoilt for choice' in articulating his identity at a particular moment. Like the Fleischman character in *Northern Exposure* in a liberal little town in Alaska, Fleischman had great difficulty at that particular moment to articulate his identity when asked by Ed. Although he recognised the need to belong to a larger social collective, without others trying to impose an identity on him to negotiate, the options were too expansive for him to make a decision at that particular moment in time. However, if one's external environment is closed and offers less avenues of expression – for example, Nazi occupied Europe during World War Two – an individual may either find his/her choice already made for him/her or

at least be very limited in this choice. It is only with this understanding that the ebb and flow of Jewish identification as well as the internal divisions amongst those identifying themselves as Jews may be understood.

6.2 The Nature of Home: Zionism, Territorialism and the Bund

From the section above and the previous discussion on diasporic Chinese and African identity, it can be seen that diasporic identity varies according to context. The variability of this identity, however, is not free-floating – what has been said before and the identificational avenues available delimit what may be articulated. In addition to this variable identity, the role of the concept of home in the construction of a diasporic identity has come to the fore.

This section is concerned with the concept of home for the Jewish diaspora. Created in diaspora and having attained, lost and re-attained their home, the Jews have had a complicated relationship with belonging and home. As noted earlier (Section 6.1.1), though the Biblical account of where their homeland lies is at best hazy, the concept nevertheless remains a central theme that is connected to the diasporic Jews. Building on the discussions on the concept of home for the Chinese and African diaspora, this section emphasises how the concept of home in diaspora is a reflection of the desire of those within it to live in a community that can accommodate and co-exist with difference. This section achieves this by utilising the views of Zionism and the alternatives proposed by the Territorialists and the Bundists.

Exploring the diasporic Jewish relationship with its home offers two insights. Firstly, it can be seen that the concept of home for the diaspora is a defence

mechanism for those of the diaspora as regard to the intolerance and abuse suffered in unaccommodating communities. Secondly, the location of home fluctuates between individuals at different times and places dependent upon their interaction with their hosts and the identity articulated. During periods of toleration, home may be where one currently resides and during periods of intolerance, home may shift to another locale. These two insights are of significance to the assumptions of Liberalism 1 and 2. As argued in Chapter Five (Section 5.4), an understanding of the role of home in the construction of a diasporic identity is necessary in the framing of a policy on multiculturalism. If diasporas are not understood as frustrated communities wanting to return to their 'motherland', their relationship with other members of a polity need not necessarily be portrayed as inevitably hostile. Instead, the possibility that diasporas and their hosts may have a relationship that is multifaceted and positive can be held open. Demonstrated through these three Jewish conceptions of home, diasporic Jews become less threatening, less problematic and less hostile in their relations with fellow members of their polity than Liberalism 1 and 2 may allow for.

6.2.1 *Zionism*

The first conception of home for the Jewish diaspora discussed here is that found in Zionism. With Herzl's publication of *Der Judenstaat* (The Jewish State) and the First Zionist Congress, the history of political Zionism began four years after Nathan Birnbaum first used the term publicly in 1892 at a meeting in Vienna (Laqueur, 1989: xix). Following Chinese and African nationalists, Zionism was a political movement driven by the belief that Jews had to rebuild their 'original' homeland in

Israel. However, even before Zionism's call for the restoration of a Jewish national homeland in the late nineteenth century, there were precursors or proto-Zionists whose writings reflected the longing for a homeland and the need to solve the 'Jewish Question'. The plans of these proto-Zionists rarely went beyond discussion but the motivations behind their discussions parallel those of the Zionists. For them, the problems faced by the Jews could be resolved through the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine.

One such proto-Zionist was the 'Red rabbi of Berlin' Moses Hess.[5] Readopting his previously abandoned belief in Judaism, Hess believed that the Jews constituted a nation and this consequently made them perpetual strangers in any land that they reside other than *Eretz Israel* (Sachar, 1993: 11-12). Moreover, Hess was pessimistic about the possibility for Jews to co-exist with the *goyim* due to the deeply entrenched nature of anti-Semitism (Laqueur, 1989: 49). Writing from his experience in Germany, Hess was adamant that assimilation, the reform of Judaism and the denial of their race would not be enough for Jews to live side-by-side with non-Jews:

> But even an act of conversion cannot relieve the Jew of the enormous pressure of German anti-Semitism. The Germans hate the religion of the Jews less than they hate their [the Jews'] race – they hate the peculiar faith of the Jews less than their peculiar noses. Reform, conversion, education and emancipation – none of these opens the gates of society to the German Jew; hence his desire to deny his racial origin (cited in Laqueur, 1989: 49).

For Hess, physical features could not be altered and there was no choice but to form a Jewish state in Palestine. Unlike Marcus Garvey who advocated a return to Africa by the African diaspora, Hess was sufficiently astute to realise not all Jews would

return to their ancestral homeland and did not advocate total migration. Instead, he wanted the Jewish national home to be the spiritual centre of world Jewry so that it could serve as a model society (Edelheist and Edelheist, 2000: 27).[6]

Various Jewish nationalist proposals continued to rise in the nineteenth century such as the *Hibbat Zion* (Love of Zion) movement influenced by Yehuda Leib Pinsker (Vital, 1975: 143-147). None of them was successful in attaining the critical mass and generating the political momentum to achieve their goals. All this changed with the Damascus affair still within living memory and the rising anti-Semitic tide caused by the Dreyfus affair when Theodor Herzl wrote *Der Judenstaat*.[7] There is little doubt about Herzl's motivation for writing his book – the need to respond to anti-Semitism was at the forefront of his mind. Experiencing first-hand the calls for the death to all Jews during the court proceedings, Herzl was shocked by the fact that all Jews were tainted with the same brush by the French public (Johnson, 1995: 380). For Herzl, emancipation did not and would not succeed for the Jews and the Jewish problem could not be solved as long as the Jews remained a minority in Europe: '[t]he Jewish question still exists. It would be foolish to deny it' (Herzl, 1993: 14). With the First Jewish Congress, Zionist wheels were set in motion. Support for its cause came from varied groups but its supporters were all bound by an essentialist understanding of Jewish identity. For the secular Jews such as Theodor Herzl, the creation of the homeland of Israel would allow Jews to avoid persecution and become a normal people just like the French, Italians and all those others who could act in world politics through the collective of a state. This view emphasised the political right of the Jews to have their own country. The second goal saw the creation of Israel as a means to ensure the continued survival of a distinct Jewish people either purely as a race or an ethnoreligious community

(Laqueur, 1989: 386-387). For the Zionists, the creation of a Jewish nation-state was seen as the means by which their slowing eroding civilisation could be restored to its former glory.

Illustrative of the manner in which one's conception of home affects the diasporic identity articulated, the Jews were divided in their assessment of the impact Israel would have on the Jewish diaspora. There was a division between those who saw a continued flourishing of the diaspora alongside Israel and those who saw the diaspora becoming meaningless with the creation of Israel. The division still persists today after the creation of Israel in 1947 (Paine, 1989, Almog, 1996, Salmon 1996). The continuing debate is evidence of the tie the concept of home has to diasporic identity formation. The link between home and diasporic identity may be due to the perception of Israel and the experience of the Holocaust. Both events, especially the creation of Israel, have reshaped the way in which the centre/periphery model that is key to conceiving diasporas has been altered (Gilman and Shain, 1999: 1-23). Previously, the centre of the Jewish diaspora was an imagined entity. Home was where one was not – the Garden of Eden, the City on the Hill or *Eretz Israel* (the Promised Land of Israel). With the Holocaust and the creation of the actual physical space of Israel, Jewish history and identity came to be understood teleologically where very event in Jewish history was intelligible only if viewed as a precursor to the Holocaust and the creation of Israel.

In addition, by being related to a horrific event, life in the diaspora became closed off to the possibility of being interpreted in any positive manner. If the centre is filled with feelings of belonging, then the periphery has to be one filled with alienation. If the centre is filled with the authenticity of Jewish-ness that is understood as the experience of the Holocaust, then the periphery becomes

inauthentic. As opposed to a loose confederation of Jewish-ness, Jewish-ness becomes more closed off to interpretation. This centre-periphery issue is of significance to the framing of a policy on multiculturalism. If Jewish-ness is viewed as a loose confederation where Jews do not have to 'return' home to ensure that they do not feel 'out of place', then this holds open the possibility for harmonious inter-group relations between Jews and others in multicultural polities. If Jewish-ness is understood to be exclusive and home is the state of Israel, the Jews can never be viewed as being 'at home' with others.

6.2.2 *Alternatives to Zionism*

Critiques of Zionism came from many different corners such as the liberal-assimilationist stance and the religious orthodoxy (Laqueur, 1989: 385-413). In modified from, both still exist. In summary, the assimilationists were confident that if emancipation ran its course, the Jewish problem would be solved. With increased levels of education and a general increase in prosperity, anti-Semitism would fade away. Furthermore, for the assimilationists, Jewish identity did not need to be tied to the state of Israel as home was where 'they were at'. For the religious orthodoxy, the creation of Israel was against their faith. Comparable to some Rastafarians, the religious orthodoxy had an ambivalent relationship with home as they had to wait for God's redemption. To permit an appreciation of the other alternatives to Zionism with its specific understanding of diasporic Jewish identity, two other alternatives – the Territorialists and the Bundists – are discussed here. The Territorialists and Bundists have been chosen here because it is within Territorialism and Bundism that

the differing concepts of home and its relationship to identity formation are best brought to light.

Led by Israel Zangwill, Territorialism separated from the Zionist movement after their plan to settle in Uganda was rejected. Though the Territorialists shared with the Zionists an underlying unquestioning essentialist understanding of Jewish identity, the Territorialists did not attach value to either the supposed tie between the Jewish people and Palestine as a historic right or that there was an organic connection between people and place (Laqueur, 1989: 414). In 1905, the Jewish Territorial Organisation (JTO) was formed. It considered geographically diverse sites such as Angola, Canada, Australia and Mexico as possible sites for the new Jewish state. In each case, there was reluctance by these states to receive a large influx of Jews as well as an objection to any arrangement that could possibly lead to some form of political autonomy (Vital, 1982: 443). The government of Ontario was particularly candid, stating their opposition to 'any system of settlement which tends to perpetuate racial and religious differences' (Vital, 1982: 443). The Portuguese government were slightly more receptive of a Jewish settlement in Angola but was careful to offer no true political power and insisted that the language of instruction for all primary schools would be through the medium of Portuguese (Vital, 1982: 443). Zangwill failed in achieving 'Zionism without Zion' and the movement slowly faded away. Territorialism's failure to attract great support is an interesting example of the power and attraction that *Eretz Israel* has on Jewish identity. Zangwill's plan though practical could not muster the support that it needed as few diasporic Jews identified with it. If taken to fruition, his plan would have merely created a state for the Jews rather than a Jewish state. With no symbolic character and representation behind it, it lacked any Jewish-ness about it.

A stronger alternative to the Zionists was the Bund, an abbreviation of the General Worker's Union in Lithuania, Poland and Russia, founded in 1897. As a militant socialist party, it was equally opposed to cooperating with the Jewish bourgeoisie, the orthodox and the communists. Despite being scattered all over the world, members of the Bund believed that the Jews were a nation and had a political platform advocating a form of diasporic nationalism with the slogan 'Nationhood without statehood' (Laqueur, 1989: 414). Its stated purpose was 'to create a separate Jewish worker's organisation which would lead and educate the Jewish proletariat in the struggle for economic, social and political emancipation' and 'like all nations, the Jewish nation too has to have equal political, economic and national rights' (Vital, 1975: 172). The destiny of the Jewish nation, for the Bund, was to be an ever-present minority in European society. Cultural and communal autonomy would be necessary for Jewish national self-expression but true justice could never be attained until capitalist society was overthrown and replaced by socialist society. The Bund ceased to exist after the severe depletion of Polish Jewry post-Holocaust and the establishment of a communist regime in that country. Some of its members managed to make their way to the United States but the movement faded into obscurity. Besides restrictive external factors, the Bund could not generate the necessary support for its position. From the start, its potential membership was prematurely limited due to its ideological opposition to working with the rest of the Jewish people other than its fellow socialists. Despite the failure of the Bund, the Bundist movement highlights the ability of those in the diaspora to shift their conception of home dependent on the environment and motivated by a desire to be treated as equals in the states they were in. As opposed to conceiving of home as located in *Eretz Israel* or any piece of territory that they could make their own, the Bundists

located their home in a socialist paradise. They did not deny that the Jews possessed a distinct identity and it was in this paradise that this identity would not lead to the anti-Semitism generated by capitalism.

6.3 The Diasporic Jews and Multiculturalism

As forwarded in Chapter One (Section 1.2), the three diasporic experiences presented in this thesis are episodic in the sense that each further develops the insights of the previous. Building on the two previous episodes and to drive home the main argument of the thesis that Liberalism 1 and 2 are unable to foster long-term accord within a multicultural polity, it is with the Jewish diaspora that a sustained engagement is carried out with the Jewish diasporic experience in variants of Liberalism 1 and 2 through history[8].

Divided into the three segments of the ancient period, the Middle Ages and the modern era, this section shows that for the major part of history, Jews and Gentiles have successfully lived together in a harmonious mutually beneficial relationship. Tension and hostility have only erupted between Jews and Gentiles when identities were petrified into oppositional uncompromising poles. Moreover, this section shows how diasporic Jewish identity is non-essentialist and it may appear in a variety of forms and degrees. Jewish-ness need not be framed in constant antagonism with other identities. Therefore, based on these points, I argue that Liberalism 1 and 2 are unable to provide long-term harmony within a polity due to the following.[9] (1) Both Liberalism 1 and 2 approach the management of difference in an overly pessimistic manner thus dismissing from the outset that inter-group harmony can be the norm rather than the exception. (2) Liberalism 1's call for a

difference-blind approach is difficult to sustain long-term civility between groups as it requires continual strong enforcement. And finally, (3) By identifying groups to be protected under its policy of multiculturalism, Liberalism 2 reifies fluctuating differences, reinforces stereotypes and prevents individuals from defining their own lives.

6.3.1 *The Jews of Ancient Times*

In this section, the experiences of the Jewish diaspora in both the Babylonian and Roman Empire are discussed to illustrate the following. (1) Liberalism 1 with is difference-blind approach to the management of difference is unable to bring about long-term harmony, and (2) short-term harmony was secured without resorting to the identification and policing of group boundaries as demanded by Liberalism 2. Admittedly, neither rule was democratic in the contemporary sense, but both empires did practise a form of multiculturalism similar to that of Liberalism 1. Both empires were multi-ethnic and multi-religious requiring the multitude of differing groups within its borders to respect each other's rights and gods in order to secure the inner stability of the empire (Gruen, 2002: 15-53). The treatment of the Jews by the Romans, according to one historian, was often beyond toleration as they were treated with 'disregard and detachment' (Gruen, 2002: 53). Although Jews and Gentiles lived and often profited from these living arrangements, civility ended with the demise of the Roman Empire in the Middle Ages.

The division of history into ancient times, the Middle Ages and the modern era is at best difficult. For the purposes of this section, in order to steer through the history of the Jewish people, the ancient period is taken to be the period before the

fall of the last Roman emperor (pre-476 AD). Probably the two most tumultuous and significant events during this period for the Jews was the razing of the Temple (*Bet ha-Mikdash*) by the Babylonians in 586 BC, and its destruction once again by the Romans in 70 AD after it had been restored in 515 BC. Both events are especially significant as the former left a permanent mark on the Jewish psyche as regards to the coupling of the concept of diaspora with the associated negative overtones of Jewish self-understanding of their plight when faced with centuries of anti-Semitism (Cohen, 1997: 3). The latter event is also important as, with the second destruction of their Temple, the Jews were cast out into the political wilderness with the obliteration of Israel as a political entity and the dispersal of a great majority of its people from its political centre.

With the fall of the Assyrian empire, the Babylonians moved into the political vacuum it had left. Having conquered Judah, the King of Judah, his princes and craftsmen were taken from Jerusalem to Babylon (Johnson, 1995: 78, Woolfson, 1980: 28). In response to rebellion by the Israelites during their occupation, the Temple in Jerusalem was torn down, the walls demolished and all key military, civic and religious personnel were forced into captivity (Woolfson, 1980: 30, Johnson, 1995: 78). This incident marked the dispersal of the Jews from the land promised to them by God. Moreover, this dispersal permanently informed the traditional understanding of the term diaspora with its feelings of loss, insecurity and isolation, cut off from one's land and exiled to another and oppressed by an alien ruling class.

Despite this conventional interpretation of the original exile, some have pointed out that exile was not absolutely unfavourable for Jews (Cohen, R. 1997: 1-29). Instead, the time in Babylonian enforced exile was beneficial to the Jews as Judaism on the whole profited from the engagement with diverse cultures found in

the exiled lands, the laws of Judaism were codified through the development of the Torah and the first synagogues were created (Cohen, R. 1997: 4-5, Woolfson, 1980: 35-36). By being in exile, those that were determined to cling on to their roots had the opportunity to construct and define their historical experience and to invent their traditions. When encouraged by the Babylonian King to return to Judah as a form of enlightened colonialism, it was the returnees who introduced many of the ethnic particularisms and religious fundamentalism found in Jewish culture in contemporary times. For example, those that returned from exile developed the practise of non-exogenous marriage and highly prescribed purification rituals such as male circumcision and strict dietary laws (Woolfson, 1980: 35).

For those that remained abroad, Jewish communities in Alexandria, Antioch, Damascus, Asia Minor and Babylon became centres of learning so much so that when the Romans destroyed the rebuilt Temple, Babylon became the 'nerve and brain-centre' of Jewish thought (Cohen, 1997: 6). Besides the practical benefits exile brought, the need for Jews to co-exist peacefully with their host finds biblical support in Jeremiah:

> Build ye houses, and dwell in them; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them.... And ye shall seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives; and pray unto the Lord for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace (Jeremiah, 24: 5-7).

Eschewing the traditional conception of diaspora as a position where one of filled with a yearning to return home and a resistance to an alien environment, Jeremiah opens up the possibility for Jews (some might say it commands the Jews) to exist peacefully amongst the *goyim* until God restores them to their promised land.

The Romans captured Jerusalem in the first century BC and ruled for several centuries. The Jews were by then widely scattered throughout the empire with only an estimated 2.5 million of them living in Palestine out of a total 8 million living in other parts of the world (Sowell, 1996: 236). Jewish populations tended to concentrate in urban areas and the range of occupations held by the Jews was very diverse. In addition to being merchants, there were artisans, farmers, manual labourers and mercenary soldiers (Sowell, 1996: 237). In general, although particular Roman rulers were repressive towards the Jews, Roman rule was marked by its attempt to accommodate Jewish difference (Cohen, 1994: 31). Jews under Roman rule were not singled out for oppression by the fact that they were Jews. There was some hostility between the Greeks and the Jews in Roman cities but the Romans were quick to suppress such outbreaks as they were a threat to public order and, at the end of the day, to the stability of the empire (Gruen, 2002: 54-62). In some areas such as taxation, Roman rule was found to be burdensome but not intolerable (Gruen, 2002: 74). Roman wrath was only unleashed when the Jews attempted to revolt against them. For example, after the second revolt in Jerusalem, a large number of Jews were slaughtered or sold into slavery.

From the experience of the Jews in both empires, it can be seen that, for the most part, Jews and Gentiles lived amongst each other harmoniously under a system similar to that of Liberalism 1. They did so without the specific protection of groups as demanded by Liberalism 2. Under both empires, although groups were not singled out for protection, they were given the social space to practise their own religion and customs as defined by themselves. Moreover, these groups were bound by the overarching political system and they had to accept and respect the rules of the particular empire of the time. However, although this version of Liberalism 1 did

to a large degree secure short-term inter-group harmony, it achieved this only through harsh enforcement. Once this harmony could no longer be enforced as the empire was weakened or had collapsed, oppression and violence erupted often (as we shall now see in the next section) throughout the Middle Ages.

6.3.2 *The Jews of the Middle Ages*

The two most significant relationships for the Jews during this period were with their theological cousins the Christians and the Muslims. By the time of the overthrow of the last Roman emperor, the Jews were a far-flung group spread around the Mediterranean, Europe and the Arabian Peninsula. By investigating the experiences of the Jews in the Middle Ages, this section highlights the shortcomings of both Liberalism 1 and 2 in developing and sustaining long-term inter-group harmony. The multiculturalism practised in Muslim and Christian lands contained elements of both Liberalism 1 and 2. Similar to Liberalism 1, both Christian and Muslim societies bestowed rights to the individual from above in the manner of Hobbes' *Leviathan*. However, by highlighting specific events during this period, the downfall of their form of Liberalism 1 is revealed – if rights are given, they can also be taken away. In both Christian and Muslim lands, when protected by the political system, Jewish life flourished next to non-Jews. However, when intolerance grew from waning fortune, the rights previously given to Jews were often taken away with the Jews often being turned into scapegoats for all of life's ills. With regard to the assumptions of Liberalism 2, the multicultural policies of the times deprived individuals of the cultural space to revise their identification by firmly placing individuals into fixed groups. This rigid categorisation led to problems as

individuals were trapped within their designated group without the ability to define themselves. Moreover, due to the designation of groups, inter-group relations were tense as existing negative stereotypes were reified. To illustrate these points, the discussion here will begin with the Jews in the Islamic world followed by an examination of their experience in the Christian world.

During the Middle Ages, most Jews lived in the Islamic world (Lewis, 1984: 67). Coupled with its military might, the early Islamic world was a significantly advanced society that stood at the forefront of disciplines such as mathematics and philosophy (Watt, 1972: 33-39). The confidence of the Islamic world was reflected in the treatment of the Jews within their empire. In a manner echoing the rule of both the Babylonians and the Romans and in a form similar to Liberalism 1, the Ottomans ruled the diverse groups within their empire with a tolerance for difference (Sowell, 1996: 249). Besides the need for harmony within their empire, the practise of toleration was also deeply motivated by the practical benefits brought by the Jews to the empire. The Ottomans benefited from the knowledge of Western languages, politics and military technology the Jews brought with them (Sowell, 1996: 249-250). Both groups lived harmoniously and the Jews were trusted to a degree that politically sensitive positions, such as the job of interpreters and customs agents, were often entrusted to them (Lewis, 1984: 133-135). Unlike the Christians within the Ottoman Empire, the Jews were not treated with suspicion for being sympathetic to Christian states given the persecutions they had endured there. Ottoman trust in the Jews went as far as Jews often being moved to newly conquered Christian cities either to replenish the depopulated cities or to act as a counterweight to potentially disloyal Christian inhabitants. For example, Jews were encouraged and even ordered to move to Istanbul after its conquest in 1453 (Shaw, 1991: 28). Besides the

practical benefits brought by the Jews and the need for harmony, there was a religious reason for the toleration practised by the Ottomans. Islam's division of the world into the House of Islam (dār al-islām) and the Domain of War (dār al-harb) accorded non-Muslims residing in the House of Islam the free exercise of religion without the need to convert as long as tribute was paid (Cohen, 1994: 112). Thus, Jews could occupy a recognised place in the hierarchy of Muslim society without much religious objection.

The Jews were very successful in holding a diverse range of occupations during the Ottoman Empire and their integration and participation in the empire is testimony to the ability of Jews and Gentiles to reside peacefully alongside each other. In addition, not only was the interaction peaceful, it also brought about mutual benefit. In terms of trade, Jews were prominent at the local as well as the international level. Jewish peddlers engaging in barter trade were common in towns such as Gallipoli and Salonika as well as the surrounding region (Sowell, 1996: 250, Johnson, 1995: 239, Shaw, 1991: 92-93). On the international stage, benefiting from relations similar to the *guanxi* relations of Chinese traders discussed earlier in Chapter Three, inter-Jewish trade was established between Jews of different countries (Sowell, 1996: 250). In this tolerant era, many Jews in the Islamic world worked as physicians alongside Muslim and Christian contemporaries (Lewis, 1984: 56). True to the meritocratic and tolerant policy practised by the Ottomans with regard to their treatment of minorities, many Jews were physicians to the Ottoman sultans. By the sixteenth century, the majority of palace medical staff were Jewish (Sowell, 1996: 251).

Besides the material benefits brought about by Ottoman rule, interaction with the Muslims also brought with it cultural gains and developments.[10] For example,

influence from the Islamic world's concern for the purity of the Arabic language led to re-examination of Hebrew grammar and style by the Jews (Grayzel, 1968: 294). In addition, centuries of Muslim rule in Spain awakened Jewish intellectual interests in the sciences after centuries of being absorbed in specifically Jewish matters (Patai, 1977: 122-123). Thus, it is possible to see how in periods of toleration and civility, the Jews were deft at carving out a successful life for themselves. Both Jews and non-Jews mutually benefited from this relationship. The Jews were given the opportunity to rise up in the social structure and their own culture was refined through the interaction with those of outsiders. For the Ottomans, the Jews provided the skills necessary for economic and technological development.

Nonetheless, illustrative of the fragility of Liberalism 1 in securing long-term harmony, the rights bestowed to the Jews by the Ottomans were rescinded when the empire went into decline. Owing to the uprisings amongst European subjects and the European conquest of both North Africa and the Middle East, the decline in Ottoman power and confidence led to a reversal on their policy of tolerance (Sowell, 1996: 252). Unprotected by a strong empire, old animosities surfaced and civility collapsed as the end of the practise of toleration narrowed the identificational avenues for the Jews leaving them to be pigeonholed as the 'Other'. There are several examples of the growing intolerance and subsequent oppression. In Yemen, Jews were made to clean public latrines and Jewish children were taken away from their parents to be raised as Muslims (Gerber, 1992: 226). In parts of Morocco, Jews were required to go barefoot when they left their enclave, leading one Jewish visitor to Morocco to describe them as 'oppressed, miserable creatures, having neither the mouth to answer an Arab or the cheek to raise their head' (Sowell, 1996: 253). Day-to-day harassment was common with Muslim children assaulting Jewish inhabitants

without having to fear Jewish reprisal for such action was punishable by death (Lewis, 1996: 164-168). Therefore, from the experience of the diasporic Jews under Ottoman rule, it can be seen that long-term harmony cannot be securely attained though Liberalism 1. Admittedly, Liberalism 1 is able to secure short-term inter-group accord but this accord cannot be sustained once it is unable to be enforced. Moreover, this accord is a fragile one as different groups fail to understand why harmony in itself is a good thing. As the people were not given the opportunity to participate in the framing of these rights, they failed to understand why inter-group respect and toleration should be practised when civility was not enforced.

In general, although the Jews received better treatment by the Muslims in the Middle Ages than those in the European Christian lands, the full brunt of Jewish persecution by the Christians was not felt until the latter stages of the period (Sowell, 1996: 240). After the fall of the Roman Empire, the tolerance of religious and cultural differences practised by the pagan barbarians who took their place had allowed the Jews to survive and, in some places, thrive. Even after the Christianisation of the Europeans, mutual interaction and social toleration was still practised as these societies required the technological and economic benefits offered by the more educated and better-networked Jews. During this early period of the Middle Ages, interaction between the Jews and the Christians was of such a significant degree that many Christians converted to Judaism (Sowell, 1996: 240). As the world in which they lived was very much structured by the relations between the Muslims and Christians, the Jews became well known for being intermediaries in the international trade interlinking the two dominant societies (Kotkin, 1992: 40, Sowell, 1996: 240-241). As they were considered neutral in the struggles between Islam and Christianity, Jews moved between both societies fairly easily and were

unhindered by the restrictions placed on either Muslims or Christians in rival lands. This reliance on the Jews by the Europeans allowed many Jews to prosper – Jewish artisans, peddlers and merchants extensively furnished the Europeans materially and intellectually allowing for the revival of European urban communities (Grayzel, 1968: 281-282). Jewish peddlers brought products and ideas from the wider world to provincial communities whilst others brought Eastern luxuries by being members of the entourages of aristocrats. Besides their activities in commerce, there were also Jews in rural occupations who owned farms and vineyards (Sowell, 1996: 240).

With regard to the protection offered to them by ruling elites, Jews were often treated with ambivalence. During certain times, due to their position as successful entrepreneurs, it suited the ruling elites of Christian Europe to protect the Jews. The Jews not only facilitated commerce but they also contributed to the treasury through taxes. At other times, rulers were predisposed to turn on them if it was expedient. For example, as a means of ridding creditors and outstanding debts, religious intolerance was harnessed amongst the populace to justify expulsions and confiscations (Sowell, 1996: 243-245). For example, in 1306, to secure the debts owed to Jewish creditors for himself, King Philip of France expelled the Jews from his kingdom claiming that they charged excessively high interest rates (Sowell, 1996: 242). To his dismay, the debts he collected fell short of the taxes that he previously collected from the expelled Jews. Furthermore, the Christian moneylenders who replaced the Jews charged higher interest rates resulting in the rise of public discontent. As a result, the Jews were invited back. This cycle of expulsion followed by an invitation to return was also experienced in many medieval German cities (Grayzel, 1968: 345-347).

Besides the ruling elites, the Christian Church also played a large part in generating anti-Jewish feeling amongst the general population. Fearing the threat of dwindling numbers to their flock due to the Judaic conversion of some Christians who associated with the Jews, the Catholic Church reacted strongly to defend its position in Christian lands. To achieve this, the Church developed a set of polices, laws and practises designed to keep Jews and Christians from socialising, forbidding Jews from proselytising, and restricting Jews in the practise of their own religion (Glick, 1999: 33-36). The success of the Church in building up public ignorance and animosity towards the Jews was seen in the rise of anti-Semitic hostility reaching new heights that shocked a succession of popes into issuing edicts against anti-Jewish violence and libels. The most famous libel that arose time and time again was the accusation that Jews killed Christian babies and drank their blood (Glick, 1999: 38).

Corresponding with Sartre's understanding of the Jew as a creation by non-Jews, the continuous inculcation of anti-Semitic feelings in the masses by both the church and the ruling elites slowly cultivated a festering resentment that often spiralled out of their control. Like Sartre's Jew, Jews of this period did not benefit from a large 'identificational space' with large avenues for different degrees of self-expression. Instead, these choices were narrowed and sometimes even made for them by their external environment. This situation is illustrated by events in Spain during the fourteenth century (Sowell, 1996: 247). By the end of the thirteenth century, with Moorish rule over Spain on the wane, many Jews found themselves once again under Christian authority. Though not exclusive to this period, Jews during this time excelled at jobs such as shop-keeping, money lending, financial administrators and tax collectors which was mutually beneficial to both them and

Christian society. Strong anti-Semitic feeling by the masses generated by an envy over the growing prosperity and influence of the Jews was kept in check by a strong central government. However, the Black Death that swept across Europe combined with a civil war between 1369 and 1371 led to severe social disruption and a substantial weakening of the powers of the central government. After previous years of utilising anti-Semitic feeling for their own ends, mass hatred of the Jews went beyond the control of the ruling elites and the Church. Anti-Jewish violence swept across the country culminating in the forced conversions of tens of thousands of Jews. In addition, many Jews who had not directly been coerced into conversion did so on their own volition as it had become increasingly dangerous to be Jewish.[11] Ruling elites and the Church could not do very much to stem a feeling that they themselves had created and benefited from.

Thus, unlike ancient times, the Middle Ages bear witness to the creation and calcification of Jewish difference that was to have severe repercussions in later periods. Although, as noted, the treatment Jews received under the Christians and the Muslims varied from place to place as well as from time to time commonalities between their diverse experiences are still identifiable. Perhaps the most obvious of these commonalities was the fact that the Jews were extremely successful during periods of toleration. If those in power did not emphasise and cultivate the differences between Christians, Muslims and Jews, all three communities were rather successful in co-existing alongside each other. Anti-Semitism often arose because it was incited by opportunistic elites – for example, those in the ruling classes and the church – for their own benefit. Though often successfully manipulated for the benefit of the ruling elites, these anti-Jewish feelings were difficult to control once let loose. The construction of the Jew as the 'Other'

permeated deeply into the consciousness of the masses thus sealing the fate of the Jews as the most convenient scapegoat whenever there was widespread discontent. Finally, the widely dispersed Jewish communities were by no means monolithic and united. Jews held different occupations, spoke different languages and there was even hostility between specific Jewish groups. One of the major divisions amongst the Jews was based on their specific country of residence. Named from the Hebrew word for their specific country of residence, the entrenched division between the Sephardic Jews of Spain and the Ashkenazic Jews of Germany was ingrained to a degree that these names remained in use long after further migrations. Moreover, the Jews who settled in different lands had different languages, religions and cultures. These differences reflected the differences found in the land that they inhabited as well as the opportunities and rights offered or denied to them. Demonstrating the point that the diasporic experience is temporary and dependent upon the decisions made by individuals and their external environment, there was no point during this period that there was a continual tie between all the different nodes of the diaspora as identification with Jewish-ness ebbed and flowed.

The experiences of the Jews in the Middle Ages illustrates some of the difficulties both Liberalism 1 and 2 face when attempting to secure long-term inter-group accord. The inter-group accord secured through a difference-blind approach to multiculturalism as proposed by Liberalism 1 is susceptible to rapid deterioration once the rule of law cannot be enforced comprehensively. As demonstrated in both Christian and Muslim lands of the period, Jews were allowed to flourish next to non-Jews only when protected. However, when the rights given to Jews were taken away by the Ottomans or by the ruling Christian elites, smooth inter-group relations soon dissolved with devastating consequences for the Jews. Furthermore, similar to

Liberalism 2, the multicultural policies practised in both Muslim and Christian lands denied individuals the ability to revise their identities. Individuals were categorised as Muslim, Christian or Jewish and these categories further reinforced the negative stereotypes that were present. Illustrated in fourteenth century Spain, these stereotypes fuelled hatred and violence to a degree that was beyond the control of the government.

6.3.3 *Jews of the Modern Era*

Similar to the varied treatment experienced during the Middle Ages, the modern era saw the Jews receiving differing treatment at different times and in different places. The modern era in Europe began with the weakening of Islamic power. Most Jews in the beginning of this period lived in lands under Islamic control but when anti-Jewish hostility was on the ascent, most migrated to Christian Europe where the worst persecutions of the Middle Ages seemed to be over, economies were steadily advancing and the political systems were relatively stable. Following from the previous section, the diasporic Jewish experience in the modern era is discussed in order to highlight the failings of both Liberalism 1 and 2. The following is demonstrated through the experience of the diasporic experience in the modern era. (1) Illustrated by the Jewish diasporic experience in Western Europe, although rights were offered to protect Jews as envisioned by Liberalism 1, these rights often did not secure long-term multicultural harmony. (2) Seen in the Jewish diasporic experience in Eastern Europe, by identifying groups following Liberalism 2, difference and stereotypes become reified leading to a step-back in the project of multiculturalism in the long-term.

The main division of world Jewry during this period were between the Jews of Eastern Europe and those of Western Europe. With regard to the experience of the Jews in Western Europe, although the Jews were expelled from many parts of Western Europe during the Middle Ages, many returned during the modern era. For example, by the 1500s, Jews had returned to areas in France, the Netherlands and Tuscany (Sowell, 1996: 272). In Venice, the number of ghettos rose from 900 in 1552 to about 1700 by 1586. On the whole, the broad pattern over the subsequent centuries was an emergence of a significant Jewish presence in Western Europe. Whilst the Jews of Eastern Europe struggled to balance their more traditional lifestyle in an ambivalent environment, the Jews of Western Europe had to do the same while being caught up by the changes brought about by the troika of the Renaissance, Enlightenment and the scientific revolution.[12] These changes were important for the Jews during this period as it led to both the development of civil rights and the secularisation of government. As it is with discussing any social transformation, it is very difficult to put a precise date to the beginning of the process. Although the trends of change – the ideas and concepts – had penetrated the state apparatus and society at a much earlier date, actual substantial legal change may be traced back to January 28, 1790 and September 28, 1791 when the French national assembly turned the Sephardim of the South and the Ashkenazim of Alsace into full citizens (Katz, 1998: 42).

Although this was not established fully throughout all of Europe until the twentieth century, in countries such as France where Jews achieved equal status relatively quickly, tension between the Jews and their emancipators soon came to a head. Despite *de jure* citizenship, the *de facto* world of everyday life threw the whole process into doubt with the 'Jewish question' persistently arising. The 'Jewish

question' involved the constant suspicion placed on the Jews after they were given equal rights as citizens (Johnson, 1995: 306-310). The 'question' referred to the issue of whether the Jews could be trusted as equal members of their polity or whether their loyalties lay with fellow Jews. Illustrating a key failing of Liberalism 1, both affairs show how a difference-blind approach to the management of difference is problematic as continued enforcement is the lynchpin to its success. Without strong enforcement to impose civility, true long-term accord cannot be established. For example, anti-Semitism and xenophobia found in the day-to-day world hindered true Jewish equality and the Damascus and Dreyfus affair cast doubt over the *de jure* status of French Jews and the possibility of their co-existence as equals (Wolitz, 1994: 120). Both affairs have been explained in greater depth at a previous point and only a short summery is offered here (see Endnote 7). The Damascus affair occurred in February 1849 when the Jews were wrongly convicted for the murder of a friar and his servant (Edelheit and Edelheit, 2000: 27). The Dreyfus affair in 1894 involved the false conviction and imprisonment of Alfred Dreyfus, a Jewish captain in the French army, for espionage due to a combination of professional incompetence and anti-Semitic feelings amongst the officers that headed France's counter-espionage section (Johnson, 1995: 385). Both affairs exposed the undercurrent of anti-Semitism within French society and it made Western European Jewry aware of the difficulties surrounding the process of their acceptance into European society.

With regard to their *de facto* equality, many Jews of the period remained sceptical as anti-Semitic stereotypes were widespread (Johnson, 1995: 456-459). For example, *The Times* published an article on 8 May 1920 entitled 'The Jewish Peril'. The article questioned if Britain had 'escaped a *Pax Germanica* to fall in to *Pax*

Judaica' and was strongly influenced by *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* (Johnson, 1995: 457).[13] Moreover, the modern era saw a subtle but devastating addition to the anti-Jewish stereotypes found in Christian Europe and the Islamic lands during the Middle Ages with pseudo-scientific theories regarding race supplementing this cocktail of hate (Johnson, 1995: 382-383). Developed by individuals such as Voltaire and furthered by the Nazis, anti-Semitism was broadened to include a focus on ancestry and descent.[14] This racialisation of anti-Semitism is significant as it eliminated the possibility of assimilation by Jews as a means of avoiding hostility thus, in effect, hardening the division between Jews and Gentiles (Sowell, 1996: 258-259). Moreover, the writings of Karl Marx left and indelible black mark on the Jews by identifying them as important agents of capitalism. In 1843, Bruno Bauer published an article entitled *The Jewish Problem* where he demanded that the Jews abandon Judaism completely and transform their plea for equal rights into a campaign for human liberation from both the state as well as religion. Marx replied to Bauer's work in two essays called *On the Jewish Question* (1843) were he accepted Bauer's views and approvingly quoted Bauer's exaggerated claim that 'the Jew determines the fate of the whole [Austrian] empire by his money power.... [and] decides the destiny of Europe' (Marx, 1971: 107). Unlike Bauer, Marx felt that the problems stemmed not from Judaism but were of a social and economic nature. 'Let us', he wrote, 'discuss the actual secular Jew not the Sabbath Jew.... but the everyday Jew.... What is the secular basis of Judaism? Practical need, selfishness. What is the secular cult of the Jew? Haggling. What is his secular God? Money' (Marx, 1971: 110). Thus, for Marx, using the power derived from his wealth, the Jew has gone on to enslave and corrupt Christianity, which has in turn corrupted the world.

Despite these examples of the difficulty the Jews faced in being treated as equals in European society, some Jews managed to rise – although admittedly by abandoning their faith – into the higher echelons of Western European society. Conversion to Christianity was a way in which Jews found success during the age of emancipation (Johnson, 1995: 312). As discussed, it was common for Jews to convert in order to avoid persecution pre-Enlightenment and it was ironic that religious conversions increased despite emancipation. The feeling of the times regarding the adoption of Christianity might be compared with the manner one may feel compelled to learn English in the twentieth century. The use of conversion in order to be accepted within society was not an easy decision but not to do so often resulted in a heavy sacrifice. Demonstrating the malleability of Jewish-ness and the role played by Judaism in its construction, there were differing opinions on the utilisation of conversion. An Austrian novelist and newspaper editor captured the differing views succinctly,

> [o]ne Jew can't bring himself to make the sacrifice and gets baptised. A second makes it, but in his heart regards his Judaism as a misfortune and comes to hate it. A third, just because the sacrifice has been so heavy, starts to grow closer to his Judaism (Johnson, 1995: 312).

Not all Jews took the route of conversion to attain success. The Rothschilds were a triumphant example of the avoidance of either baptism or failure. They were remarkable as they managed to achieve the four goals that Jews throughout the centuries had found difficult and often incompatible: (1) to acquire great wealth rapidly through honest means; (2) to distribute it widely without losing the confidence of governments; (3) to continue to amass great profits; and (3) to remain

Jewish whilst doing so (Johnson, 1995: 314). They became one of the most successful Jewish families and remained popular despite doing so.

The lengthy, testing and complex process of Jewish emancipation carried on through the modern era until two millennia's worth of anti-Semitism – pagan, Christian, secular, academic and folk – were melded together by Hitler and the Nazis and took the form of the Final Solution. There were almost 9 million Jews living in the countries of Europe and the Nazi's murdered almost 67 percent of them (Johnson, 1995 497). Western European states differed in their zeal to participate in the Final Solution with different countries cooperating with the Nazi's at different intensities in the murder of the Jews.[15]

With regard to the Jewish diasporic experience in Eastern Europe, by 1795, there were approximately eight hundred thousand Jews within Russian territory due to the redrawing of territorial borders and despite the fact that Russia had centuries of anti-Jewish policies including a decree by Catherine I banning them from the country (Sowell, 1996: 263). Due to a combination of both enforced and self-imposed segregation, anti-Jewish sentiments from the Middle Ages were allowed to continue. This segregation demonstrates the dangers of stereotypes that result when groups are identified by the state as required by Liberalism 2. With regard to enforced segregation, for example, the czarist regime of Russia was determined not to allow the Jews to progress further into their territory and confined them to the less developed regions of the Russian empire – what was known as the Pale of Settlement. Jews were forbidden to live – giving rise to the phrase – 'beyond the Pale' thus ensuring that they could not settle in urban areas such as St. Petersburg and Moscow. In addition to the confinement of the Jews to the Pale of Settlement away from large urban areas, self-imposed segregation by the Jews also contributed

to anti-Semitic feelings amongst the Gentiles. Most of the Jews in the region were Ashkenazic Jews who tended to live in self-governing communities that were autonomous in their internal affairs and watchful over their own members (Sowell: 1996, 262). What was significant of these isolated communities was that by being insulated from the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century and the preliminary attempts at assimilation and accommodation of the nineteenth century, Eastern European Jewry was alienated from the Christians and also from the Jews in Western Europe (Sowell, 1996: 262-263). In the relatively backward Eastern European countries, Jews were distinct not only because of their segregation from the rest of the populace but also in terms of their livelihood. Where the bulk of the Gentiles were involved in agriculture or other forms of physical labour, the Jews were set apart due to their involvement in commerce, industry and professional occupations. While many of the Jews within this region were not prosperous, the Jews conducted a disproportionate amount of commerce relative to the total percentage of population.[16] It is not too farfetched to assume that this social and economic segregation between the Gentiles and Jews was one of the foundations of the Holocaust. As they were already cut-off from the rest if society, its was easy for the Nazis to further demonise the Jews and incite hatred against them.

Echoing the envy felt by the Russian middle class that led to the *pogroms* between 1880s and 1914, the rising middle class Gentiles of Eastern Europe were increasingly envious of Jewish domination of these sectors of the economy (Sowell, 1996: 264-267). The middle classes saw the Jews as an obstacle to their own socio-economic advancement and their rising discontent led to an increase in anti-Jewish violence and policies. One Polish senator summed up the *zeitgeist* by stating that '[i]f the aboriginal nation reaches economic maturity, the immigrant nation must

step aside' (Sachar, 1983: 324). In response to these anti-Jewish feelings, the Polish government in the 1920s established control of industries that were up to that point dominated by the Jews including the tobacco, salt, liquor, transportation and match making industry (Sachar, 1985: 324). Moreover, supplemented with violence, boycotts of Jewish business led to a decline in Jewish-owned stores. Though less effectively administered, similar policies were also implemented in Hungary (Sowell, 1996: 267). Beyond these moves to strip Jews of their commercial base, many universities in Eastern Europe became the breeding grounds for anti-Semitism. For example, in Poland during the 1930s, Jews were segregated in classrooms and subject to violence (Sowell, 1996: 266). Throughout Eastern Europe, due to various means, anti-Semitic action led to an overall decline in the number of Jewish university students (Mendelsohn, 1983: 237).

Of course, anti-Jewish violence and hostility pre-World War Two was overshadowed by what was to occur during Nazi occupation. Approximately 2,700,000 Polish Jews were murdered by the Nazis and a third of the 350,000 who fled Poland to Russia perished from exposure or starvation (Sachar, 1985: 325).[17] The experience of the Jews in Eastern Europe is illustrative of the dangers posed by reifying difference by identifying groups. Although the policies conducted in the region during that period are not identical to the policies forwarded by Liberalism 2, the dangers of the practise of placing individuals into specific groups remains. As it has been shown, the identification of Jews for the purpose of segregation forced them to carry on the role of scapegoat that they played during the Middle Ages. Moreover, the negative stereotypes that were associated with the Jews were continually reinforced by the separation from the Gentiles through their 'ghettoisation' and the restrictions placed upon the occupations they could have.

The summary of events in Europe during the modern era reveals some underlying trends that correspond to the previous periods. The inculcation of anti-Jewish sentiment amongst the general populace by the ruling elites and the Church throughout the Middle Ages remained present in the modern era. The ignorance of each other fostered negative stereotypes and led to *de facto* and sometimes *de jure* segregation determining where the Jews were permitted to live as well as which occupations the Jews were allowed to have. This segregation prevented any rapprochement between the Jews and the Gentiles, thus placing the Jews in a situation where they became the easiest scapegoat whenever there was a problem. Coupled together, the fostering of negative stereotypes and the enforced segregation often resulted in mob violence, murder and abuse. With regard to the various conceptions of multiculturalism, although neither multicultural policy was implemented in its pure theoretical form, some important lessons may be drawn for Liberalism 1 and 2. The Jewish experience in the modern era points towards the fragility of Liberalism 1 and 2 in securing long-term harmony. In relation to the assumptions of Liberalism 1, even though emancipation slowly delivered on its promise of equal rights for the Jews, corresponding to Muslim and Christian rule during the Middle Ages, these rights were bestowed upon the Jews from above without a preceding process of true interaction between Gentiles and Jews. Thus, little was done to combat the undercurrent of anti-Semitism present in society which often led to hostility and violence when regulations and laws to combat it were not continually enforced. For Liberalism 2, the problems stemming from the narrowing of identificational avenues by placing individuals into predefined specific groups are clearly illustrated by the experience of the diasporic Jews in Eastern Europe. As it has been shown, the identification of Jews for segregation purposes forced them to

carry on the role of scapegoat that they played during the Middle Ages. Moreover, taking a long-term view on all three periods of ancient times, the Middle ages and the modern era, the pessimism underlying both Liberalism 1 and 2's approach to the management of difference is proved misplaced. The perspective of the long-term reveals that, on the whole, Gentiles and diasporic Jews were able to live harmoniously alongside each other. It was only when variable identities were forced into oppositional corners due to a combination of manipulation by elites of anti-Semitic stereotypes on the one hand, and entrenchment of these stereotypes through segregation and identification on the other hand that hostility between Gentiles and Jews occurred.

6.4 Concluding Remarks

This third and final episode of diaspora presented here has allowed for the illustration of the following two points. (1) The term diaspora possesses clear enough conceptual perimeters to characterise a distinctly Jewish social collective. (2) The experience of the Jewish diaspora highlights the issues Liberalism 1 and 2 face in attaining long-term harmony between members of a multicultural polity. Through a discussion on the competing conceptions of Jewish diasporic identity, the first section of this chapter (Section 6.1) has emphasised the non-essentialist nature of Jewish identity. Similar to the diasporic identity of the Chinese and the Africans, the three dominant ways in which Jewish diasporic identity in the form of an ethnicity, a religion and as a construct by the anti-Semite have been articulated was discussed. The purpose of this section was to demonstrate the non-essentialist and variable nature of Jewish diasporic identity. Moreover, it was shown that regardless

of the kind of identity adopted, identity within the diaspora remains negotiable within the confines presented by an individual's environment. Furthermore, when articulated, it may take shape in a variety of degrees. Following from this, the second section (Section 6.2) has discussed the nature of home for the Jewish diaspora in order to emphasise how the concept of home for members of the Jewish diaspora, like that of the Chinese and Africans, varies according to the identity that is being articulated. Employing the concepts of Zionism, Territorialism and Bundism, this section revealed that far from being located in a specific unchanging place, the location of home is contingent upon one's context. Home for the Zionist is *Eretz Israel*, for the Territorialist it is anywhere they could have run their own affairs, whereas for the Bundists it was a socialist paradise that allowed for Jewish difference. In the final section of this chapter (Section 6.3), the long history of interaction between the Jews and Gentiles was surveyed to demonstrate how Jews and Gentiles have, more often than not, happily co-existed alongside each other. The section showed that the prospect of long-term harmony was dimmed during the ancient times, Middle Ages and the modern era only when inter-group differences were petrified into oppositional poles. Thus, it was argued that a successful multicultural policy needs to go further than either ignoring difference, as suggested by Liberalism 1, or attempting to simply identify and protect specific groups, as proposed by Liberalism 2.

In keeping with the episodic quality of the three diasporic experiences presented in this thesis where every episode further develops the insights of the previous, this chapter concludes with an analysis of the impact the experience of the diasporic Jews has on the following: (1) the diasporic experience, and (2) the difficulties faced by Liberalism 1 and 2 brought to light by the experience of

diasporas. Similar to the diasporic Chinese and African experiences, I argue that the term diaspora may be successfully applied to the experience of the Jewish people. Furthermore, I also argue that the issues highlighted by the diasporic Jewish experience demonstrate the validity of the arguments levelled against the long-term success of both Liberalism 1 and 2.

(1) ***The diasporic experience***: Following from the Chinese and African experience of diaspora, this chapter on the Jewish diasporic experience has demonstrated how the characterisation of diaspora as forwarded in this thesis is also applicable to the Jewish experience. From the analysis of the Chinese and African experience, it was revealed that diasporic identity is best understood as variation where identity is not static. Instead, I have argued that diasporic identity varies according to the subjectivities of different individuals. Such an understanding is able to account for both the inability to discover the core quality of either Chinese-ness or African-ness as well as to explain how the ebb and flow of diasporic identification is dependent upon circumstance. Those of Chinese or African descent outside of what they considered home have not consistently identified with their respective diaspora. Instead, membership to the diaspora has been dynamic, with individuals constantly entering and leaving the fold at any given time.

The experience of the Jews, as discussed in this chapter, further validates the argument that diasporic identity is both a process and a condition where there is the process of balancing one's routes and roots coupled with a condition of displacement that allows for the process to take place. From the many and sometimes competing variants of Jewish identity, such as the conception of Jewish-ness as an ethnicity, the practise of Judaism or as a condition imposed by anti-

Semites, it has been shown that diasporic Jewish-ness continually resists being pinned down to a single or collection of core features. As discussed previously (Chapter 2, Section 2.2.1; Chapter 4, Section 4.3 and Chapter 5, Section 5.5), diasporic identity resists closure with every moment of its articulation representing a temporary pause in an ongoing development. This variability of Jewish identity is relatively greater than the variability offered to those without a diasporic background. As being in a diaspora necessarily involves being somewhere whilst also being from somewhere else, Elizabeth Grosz has observed that the diasporic Jew

> automatically has access to (at least) two different kinds of discourse and history, one defined by exclusion from a social mainstream; and one provided autonomously from its [*sic*] own history and self-chosen representation. This is a position uniquely privileged in terms of social transgression and renewal (Grosz, 1990: 87).

In such a position, a balance has to continually be struck and '[w]e [the Jews] must know the right time to forget as well as the right time to remember' (Yerushalmi, 1989: 107).

However, the variability of identity is not given free rein as it is kept in check by (1) the possibilities on offer - what has been said before affects what can be said in the present, which will have a bearing on what can be said later and (2) the opportunities for self-expression presented in one's external environment. Jewish identity springs from the interplay between those whose historical memory contains Jewish history and the external factors of those wanting to identify a person as a Jew. The historical combination of Jewish life with the anti-Semitism and exclusion experienced by them in various places are merely the ingredients for the

establishment of Jewish identity. Exemplified, for example, by the experience of the Jews under Ottoman and Christian rule as well as within states of the modern era, whether it is taken up is dependent upon the agent and the avenues of expression offered by the external environment. Thus, history combines with experience, environment and agency in the articulation of one's identity at a particular moment in time. If one's external environment is very open and offers many avenues of expression, as seen in the case of the US where Judaism has developed into many different types of practise, an individual is offered a number of diverse avenues for identity articulation. However, if one's external environment offers less avenues of expression, individuals may either find themselves in a situation where an identity is imposed upon them or where they are very limited in the different ways in which they can express their identity. The most obvious example of this restriction on identity expression was in Nazi Germany.

As demonstrated by the diasporic Jewish networks during the Middle Ages which acted as a key conduit for commerce and the exchange of information and also in the networks that allowed them, from the period of the Middle Ages up to the modern era, to flee sites of oppression whenever it occurred, a uniquely diasporic identity is created within these networks. It is within these networks that the various conceptions of Jewish identity is debated and altered and it is also within these networks that different conceptions of home are discussed and revised. This results in the creation of a diasporic identity that is a balance between home and host. Diasporic communities are not permanent as there is a persistent mediation between separation and entanglement, of living here and remembering/desiring another place (Clifford, 1997: 255). The identity of diasporic Jews, except in times of intolerance, are not static as they choose to adopt it for specific moment when they enter such

networks. When they do participate in these networks, they share in a diasporic moment that creates a commonality between them. Through participation in such networks, diasporic Jews continually recreate Jewish diasporic identity. Hence, as illustrated previously in the diasporic Chinese and African experience, the Jewish diasporic experience and the diasporic identity created is an exercise in selective memory engaged in a complicated process of assimilation, resistance and negotiation.

(2) ***The difficulties faced by Liberalism 1 and 2 brought to light by the experience of diasporas*:** In the third section of this chapter (Section 6.3), the long history of the interaction between Jews and Gentiles over the course of the ancient times, Middle Ages and the modern era was analysed in order to show how Jews and Gentiles, for the most part, co-existed with each other in harmony. Moreover, the section also highlighted how the Jewish diasporic experience during the three periods served several lessons to Liberalism 1 and 2 by demonstrating several problems both face when attempting to attain long-term inter-group harmony. Divided into three temporal perspectives of (1) the long-term where the timeframe stretches over centuries and where social changes are almost imperceptible, (2) the medium-term spanning a timeframe similar to that of empires and social systems and, finally, (3) the short-term where the timeframe covers approximately the period of an individual's lifetime and where change seems the most rapid, the diasporic Jewish relationship with the Gentiles may be represented as shown in Figure 2 below:

(Fig 2) <u>The Jewish Diaspora in History</u>:

Temporal Perspective	Experience Revealed
(1) Long-term	General toleration between Gentiles and Jews
2) Medium-term	Cyclical anti-Semitism
(3) Short-term	Day-to-day civility OR Day-to-day anti-Semitism

In the long-term, it is possible to see that Jews and Gentiles have co-existed with each other with little difficulty. With such a panoramic view of a vast sweep of history spanning all three periods discussed, Jews and Gentiles have predominantly profited from living together. For example, even during their Babylonian exile in 586 BC, Jewish culture profited immensely with the development of the Torah and the creation of synagogues (Cohen, R. 1997: 4-5, Woolfson, 1980: 35-36). Moreover, during the period of the Ottomans, Jewish learning developed rapidly while the Ottomans profited from the commercial networks and scientific skills possessed by the Jews (Grayzel, 1968: 294; Patai, 1977: 122-123; Sowell, 1996: 249-250).

In the medium-term with its timeframe of roughly equalling the length of empires, the cyclical nature of anti-Semitism is exposed. Periods of tolerance have been followed by periods of intolerance. During periods of tolerance, Jewish

difference is put to the periphery in their day-to-day dealings with non-Jews. It is only in periods of intolerance, usually stirred up by opportunistic elites that seek to calcify difference, that the Jews have been forced to rearticulate their identity. For example, in the Christian lands of the Middle Ages, rulers turned on the Jews through restrictive legislation and by nurturing anti-Semitism amongst the general populace (Sowell, 1996: 243-245). Faced with intolerance, the responses from the Jewish diaspora were varied (Johnson, 1995: 312). Some chose to attempt to assimilate, others to simply pretend to do so whilst some adopted the third option of remaining defiant by even accentuating their Jewish-ness.

Finally, it is from the perspective of the short-term that either day-to-day civility or hostility is observable. In periods of toleration, Jews and Gentiles lived easily next to each other. However, when the protection offered to Jews is removed during periods of intolerance, the relationship between the Jews and the non-Jews explodes in a sudden eruption of activity. Violence occurs, blood is shed and migrations result.

With reference to the complications Liberalism 1 and 2 as theories of multiculturalism may encounter in the management of difference, three specific problems can be identified. Firstly, it has been shown that the pessimistic foundations of Liberalism 1 and 2 as discussed in Chapter 2 (Section 2.2.2) are largely unfounded. From the perspective of the long-term, spanning Jewish diasporic life in the Babylonian, Roman, Ottoman and Christian Empires to the states of the modern era, inter-group relations between Jews and non-Jews have not been marked by inevitable conflict. Although, admittedly, conflict has occurred with disastrous effect, as identities are revisable over time, inter-group conflict is not the norm. However, owing to Liberalism 1 and 2's static understanding of identity and inter-

group differences, anti-Semitic events found in the short-term are seen to represent all of history. Subsequently, this understanding informs their overly negative approach to the management of difference.

In reference to Liberalism 1, with its policy of ignoring difference by treating everyone equally under the rule of law, the Jewish diasporic experience has concurred with the findings of Chapter 4 and 5. Their experience demonstrates how long-term multicultural harmony cannot be attained through the bestowment of rights. Illustrated though the treatment of the Jews during the Ottoman Empire and Christian lands during the Middle Ages, although civility in a polity can be attained through such a means in the short-term, these rights are prone to being revised and consequently removed leading to periods of intolerance and violence. Moreover, as the experience of the Jews in France during emancipation has shown, *de jure* equality under the law did not permeate into *de facto* experience. Through the Damascus and Dreyfus Affairs, it can be seen that rights cannot be enforced effectively all the time.

Finally, with regard to Liberalism 2, as the constantly shifting diasporic Jewish identity has shown, the compartmentalisation of individuals into groups is highly problematic. As it has been shown in the discussion on Jewish identity (Section 6.1), it is impossible to find a single or set of core qualities that can allow for such a compartmentalisation. The discussion on Jewish-ness in the form of an ethnicity, the practise of Judaism or as a construct by non-Jews has revealed that these labels all contain multiple understandings. Moreover, in addition to the problems in identifying the core qualities of Jewish-ness, Jewish identity has fluctuated at different times and at different places. As such, the Jewish diasporic experience demonstrates that any attempt to identify groups not only inadvertently

reifies fluid and shifting difference but it also deprives individuals of the space to revise their identity. For example, in the Christian lands of the Middle Ages, individuals were identified and classified as Jewish and this identification prevented them from redefining themselves and, as such, stopped them from ever being accepted.

In summary, through the experience of Jewish diaspora, Chapter Six has demonstrated that (1) the term diaspora possesses clear enough conceptual perimeters to be used coherently to identify and describe a distinctly Jewish social collective; and (2) with such an understanding of the term, it is possible to employ the experience of diasporas to highlight the difficult issues Liberalism 1 and 2 face in attaining long-term harmony between members of a multicultural polity. Subsequently, the conclusion of the thesis in the final chapter offers an overall review of the failings of Liberalism 1 and 2 in securing long-term inter-group harmony within a polity and also discusses the impact of the findings of the thesis on the wider project of multiculturalism.

Endnotes to Chapter Six:

[1] Following the approach taken to Chinese and African history, the exercise here is to present a selective history to provide the characterisation of diasporas in this thesis as well as their experience in Liberalism 1 and 2 with 'real world' examples. Admittedly, it is a partial history of both the Jews and the social structures of the past but it will provide a satisfactory account to capture the concept of diaspora in relation to that history. Subsequently – as it is common with dealing with vast sweeps of history – it is not difficult to envisage historians calling into question the exclusion of certain events or for other events to be dealt with in greater depth. For example, even though the horror of the Holocaust is acknowledged, one must be wary of framing Jewish history in a manner in where all previous forms of anti-Semitism is said to culminate naturally in what unfolded. Instead, the wretchedness of the Holocaust will be taken as one example out of a plethora of anti-Semitic incidences Jews have had to endure through history.

[2] One of the difficulties in discussing diasporic Jewish identity is the possible division between the issues surrounding the identification of Jewish-ness rather than the identity of Jewish-ness. The former has as its focus the perspective of those from the outside looking in (who can be considered a Jew) whilst the latter is concerned at a more personal level (how one considers himself to be a Jew). In this section, the perspectives are not held to be mutually exclusive. Both issues are not held here in this manner as the way one is perceived is certain to have an affect on one's self-conception. For example, the experience of anti-Semitism is bound to have an impact on a person's conception of his Jewish-ness – the way he constructs himself and makes sense of the world.

[3] The relationship between religion and identity taken here is informed by the modern day functionalist approach that was anticipated by Max Weber (Hamilton, 1995: 155). The approach holds that, amongst other things, religion is 'a provider of meaning in the face of what threatens to be a meaningless world' and it can 'make the apparently arbitrary world seem meaningful and ordered' (Hamilton, 1995: 155-156). For Weber, Judaism, and hence the role of the Bible, plays an important role for the negotiation of life by the Jews (Weber, 1965: 109). Like those of the lower Hindu castes, Judaism's role is to give its believers solace in times of need – the more depressed the position of its members, the greater the salvation hopes and the closer the identification (Weber, 1965: 109).

[4] The use of matrilineal descent as a necessary condition for Jewish ethnicity has also been thrown into confusion. In 1983, the Reform movement of Judaism in the United States rejected this traditional definition of ethnicity adopting a resolution accepting any child of intermarriage as a Jew (Wertheimer, 1997: 25).

[5] As his nickname alludes to, Hess was more closely associated with socialism having worked with Marx and Engels and having had theoretical exchanges with the Young Hegelians (Laqueur, 1989: 46).

[6] Predating Herzl, Hess predicted help to set up this Jewish state would come from other nations acting in self-interest and from Jewish millionaires such as the Rothschilds (Sachar, 1989: 11). Lacking an institutional framework to carry out his plans and falling to convince most Jews to abandon their faith in emancipation, Hess, like his fellow intellectual bedmates failed to make an immediate impact (Edelheist and Edelheist, 2000: 27).

[7] The Damascus affair broke in February 1849 with the murder of a friar and his servant. Rumours of the practise of the blood libel where Jews supposedly killed Gentiles to use their blood for rituals were rife. The Turkish governor and the French Counsel believed these rumours resulting in a brutal investigation and confession under torture of a Jewish barber who implicated leaders of the Damascus Jewish community, all of whom were arrested and imprisoned (Edelheit and Edelheit, 2000: 27). After intervention by the British and Austrians, all the accused were released and the monk's valet confessed that the murder had been due to a falling out between thieves.

The Dreyfus affair in 1894 involved the false conviction and imprisonment of a Jewish captain of the French army for espionage on behalf of Germany. A combination of professional incompetence and anti-Semitic feelings amongst the officers that headed France's counter-espionage section led to the scapegoating of Alfred Dreyfus (Johnson, 1995: 385). Although the French President eventually pardoned him in 1899 after more legal proceedings, both affairs exposed the undercurrent of anti-Semitism within French society and it made Western European Jewry aware about the difficulties surrounding the process of their acceptance into European society.

[8] Undeniably, the Jews of ancient times, Middle Ages and, to a degree, the modern era did not live in liberal societies. However, this should neither prevent lessons to be learnt or disallow comparisons to be made. As it is shown below, empires such as the Babylonian, Roman and Ottoman had a very similar approach to multiculturalism as many contemporary liberal societies today.

[9] The manner in which long, medium and short term is employed here follows Fernand Braudel's understanding of the three terms. The long-term refers to an extended period of history spanning the centuries where change is slow and almost imperceptible, the medium-term to a shorter period where changes are more obvious and the short-term to the period of about an individual's lifetime where events and changes seen to be very rapid. For more on Braudel, see Chapter 1, Endnote 2.

[10] A fine example of the manner in which interaction benefited all parties is found from 711-1492 when Muslims, Christians and Jews lived in Spain (*al-Andalus*) under Muslim control. See, Menocal, MR. (2001/2). 'Culture in the Time of Tolerance: Al-Andalus as a model for our own time', *Palestine-Israel Journal*, Vol. 8/9, No. 4/1, Pg. 173-180. Living in an atmosphere of tolerance, with concerns concentrated on enhancing learning, the arts, sciences and trade, the caliphate of Cordoba became one of the most sophisticated cities in Europe at that time.

[11] These events brought about a split within the Jewish community that was to be later repeated through history. Illustrating the points that Jewish diasporic identity is variable as well as the manner in which different understandings of Judaism affect the Jewish identity matrix, the ethnically Jewish population in fourteenth century Spain became divided in three ways. (1) Those that converted to Christianity either forcefully or wilfully were known as *conversos*, (2) those that portrayed themselves as converts whilst secretly practising Judaism were known as *marranos*, and (3), there were those that remained openly Jewish in defiance of the dangers (Sowell, 1996: 247). In a division that bares a resemblance to the one above is seen in Hannah Arendt's distinction between the Jewish parvenu and the Jewish pariah – a distinction that she had appropriated from the French Jewish thinker Bernard Larare (Bernstein, 1996: 9-10). For Arendt, the Jewish pariah is one that rebels and transforms the outcast statues of being Jewish into a challenge into fighting for one's rights (Arendt, 1966: 66). The Jewish parvenu is the Jew that seeks to escape from his/her pariah status and actively seeks to be accepted by and assimilated into a society that treats Jews as outcasts (Arendt, 1966: 66). Although *conversos* became extremely successful, marrying into Christian families and even the aristocracy, they still aroused hostility from the populace. *Conversos* persistently faced the possible charge of leading the deceptive dual life of being a *marrano*. There were outbreaks of violence against the *conversos* in Toledo in 1448, Sepúlveda in 1468, in Córdoba in 1473 and in Segovia and Jaén in 1447 (Sowell, 1996: 248). Besides violence, attempts were made to make a legal distinction between the *conversos* and those born into the Christian community. To protect themselves, *conversos* insisted on the equality of all Christians regardless of birth or conversion. Illustrative of the division within diasporas, this strategy placed Jewish converts to Christianity in direct confrontation with their ethnic brethren who refused to convert by advancing anti-Jewish policies and beliefs in a country already seething with anti-Semitism (Sowell, 1996: 248).

[12] This period of Jewish history has since been recognised as an intellectual, religious and political turning point that ushered in new changes and trends. It is know as 'The Period of Enlightenment' or 'Haskalah' in Hebrew when intellectual changes are considered; 'Early Reform' when the issue of religion is in the foreground; and 'Emancipation' when the changes are discussed from a political angle (Katz, 1998: 191).

[13] *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* was a forged tract purporting to demonstrate the existence of international Jewish aspirations to gain world power (Cohn-Sherbok, 1999: 65). It was published in Russia in the beginning of the twentieth century and was widely distributed in all over Europe.

[14] The most famous of Voltaire's anti-Semitic diatribes may be found in his article '*Juifs*' in his *Dictionnaire Philosophique*:

> In short, we find in them only an ignorant and barbarous people, who have long united the most sordid avarice with the most detestable superstition and the most invincible hatred for every people by whom they are tolerated and enriched (Voltaire, 1785: 152)

[15] The German people to a large degree knew about the genocide but they did little to protest or to help the Jews escape (Johnson, 1995: 498-499). There were, however, exceptions. In Berlin, 160,000 Jews managed to escape by hiding with the aid of non-Jewish Germans. The Austrians were worse than the Germans as their role in the Holocaust was far greater in proportion to their numbers (Johnson, 1995: 499). In some ways, Austrian anti-Semitism ran deeper and was far more widespread than Germany's (Sachar, 1985: 31). Besides Hitler himself, Adolf Eichmann and Ernst Kaltenbrunner who was head of the Gestapo were Austrian. Austrians provided one-third of the personnel for the *Schutzstaffel* (SS) extermination units and Austrians commanded four of the six main death camps. In total, the Austrians had a hand in murdering half of the six million Jewish victims (Sachar, 1985: 32). In France, of the pre-war Jewish population of 340, 000, a total of 90,000 perished at the hands of the Nazis and the Vichy government (Sachar, 1985: 96). In other Western European States, the Nazis had little to no help from the local populace. Despite being an ally to Germany, the Finns refused to hand over their 2000 Jews and the Danes succeeded in moving almost all of their 5000 strong Jewish community to Sweden (Johnson, 1995: 502). In spite of local resistance, the SS murdered 40,000 of the 65,000 Jews of Belgium and in the Netherlands, a general strike by the Dutch to protect the Jews failed to ensure the survival of 105,000 out of a total of 140,000.

[16] For example, in 1921, although the Jews comprised only 11 percent of the population, they conducted more than three-fifths of the commerce in Poland (Mendelsohn, 1983: 23-26). In Hungary, on the eve of World War One, Jews made up 60 percent of the merchants in the country (Sowell, 1996: 265). In Lithuania, Jews conducted three-quarters of all commerce (Mendelsohn, 1983: 226). Jews were also well known for being self-employed professionals – bakers, tailors, shoemakers, lawyers and doctors – rather than working with other members of the population in mines and factories (Sowell, 1996: 265). Of the Polish Jews, four-fifths were involved in these one-man operations (Mendelsohn, 1983: 28). In Hungary in 1920, where the Jews were a mere 6 percent of total population, half of the country's lawyers and three-fifths of the doctors were Jewish (Mendelsohn, 1983: 29).

[17] In Hungary, 450,000 Jews – 70 percent of the total Jewish population had been victims of the Final Solution (Sachar, 1985: 343). Through the Rumanian government's collaboration with Nazi Germany, over half of the Jews perished (Sachar, 1983: 361). In Yugoslavia, Nazi occupation of the country in May 1941 saw the deaths of 55,000 Jews by 1944 (Sachar, 1985: 314). Out of this cloud of devastation of Eastern European Jewry did lie some cold comfort. In Bulgaria, despite the stripping of civil rights of Jews of the Jews by the Bulgarian premier who was a Nazi puppet, not a single Jew within Bulgarian borders was surrendered to the Nazis and 44,000 Jews survived the war – the largest number in any of the Axis countries (Sachar, 1985: 321).

Chapter Seven: Conclusion

> Almost all societies today are multicultural and likely to remain so for the foreseeable future; this is our historical predicament, and we obviously need to come to terms with it (Parekh, 2000: 336)

> People, I just want to say, you know, can we all get along? Can we get along? Can we stop making it horrible for older people and the kids? .... We'll, we'll get our justice.... We all can get along. I mean, we're all stuck here for a while. Let's try to work it out. Let's try to beat it. Let's try to work it out. (Rodney King, 2 May 1992, *New York Times*)

Against the background of human movement, where, as expressed by Parekh, 'almost all societies today are multicultural and likely to remain so for the foreseeable future', this thesis began with a simple question concerning the concept of multiculturalism. With reference to two specific forms of multiculturalism, namely Liberalism 1 and 2, what can the experience of diasporas reveal about their ability to secure long-term harmony in a multicultural polity? Diasporas have been specifically chosen to assess Liberalism 1 and 2 for two reasons. Firstly, most comprehensive discussions on multiculturalism such as those by Bhikhu Parekh (2000), Charles Taylor (1994) and Will Kymlicka (1995) have not employed the

experience of diasporas in their research. Secondly, as the number of diasporas are set to grow and as traditionally the term is used in a negative way in reference to a 'difficult' minority, there is a need to examine approaches towards multiculturalism through diasporic eyes. This thesis has found that, although both Liberalism 1 and 2 are commendable approaches to managing difference within multicultural polities, the experience of diasporas has revealed that they are unable to produce comprehensive and long-term concord.

In this concluding chapter, a clarifying and reflective posture is adopted regarding the crucial issues of the thesis. I will do so by first offering an overall review of the failings of Liberalism 1 and 2 in securing long-term inter-group harmony within a polity followed by a discussion on the impact of the findings of the thesis on the wider project of multiculturalism. The remainder of the chapter proceeds as follows. The first section (Section 7.1) summaries the findings of the thesis with examples provided from all of the three diasporic episodes. Thus, this section reviews the shortcomings of Liberalism 1 and 2 with reference to the experience of the Chinese, African and Jewish diaspora. In the second section (Section 7.2), the wider implications of the findings of this thesis to the overall project of multiculturalism are discussed. I argue here, based on the experience of diasporas, that an alternative to Liberalism 1 and 2 may be found in a policy of multiculturalism that publicly emphasises non-essentialised understandings of cultures and communities. Presented in the findings of the Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain (CFMEB) entitled *The Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain* (2000), or, as it is more commonly known, *The Parekh Report*, the experience of diasporas points towards the possibility of long-term inter-group harmony being attainable if differences and identities are not held to be static.

7.1 The Failings of Liberalism 1 and 2

The starting point of this thesis has been the hypothesis that two different ways to manage inter-group difference in a multicultural policy, namely Liberalism 1 and 2, are unable to attain long-term inter-group accord. To reiterate, as defined by Michael Walzer, the difference between Liberalism 1 and 2 is as follows. According to Walzer, in response to the management of inter-group difference in a polity, Liberalism 1 'is committed in the strongest possible way to individual rights and, almost as a deduction from this, to a rigorously neutral state… a state without… any sort of collective goals beyond the personal freedom and physical security, welfare, and safety of its citizens' (Walzer, 1994a: 99). Instead of a difference-blind approach to the management of difference, Liberalism 2 in contrast 'allows for a state to be committed to the survival and flourishing of a particular nation, culture or religion, or of a (limited) set of nations, cultures, and religions – so long as the basic rights of citizens who have different commitments or no such commitments at all are protected' (Walzer, 1994a: 99). This thesis has set out to show the inherent flaws of both Liberalism 1 and 2 by interrogating both of them in the light of the experience of diasporas. In particular, focus has been placed on their reliance on a problematic static notion of identity. In the following, I will recapitulate the main assumptions of this thesis as well as reassess how they hold up against the findings of the three episodes of diaspora discussed in Chapters Four, Five and Six.

When viewed from the perspective of the long-term with a timeframe that spans centuries, most modern day societies are multicultural in the sense that their social demographic in composed of many people 'from somewhere else'. With this in mind, at its very core, this project has claimed that identities are variable in the

sense that perceived difference is able to shift over time. For example, contemporary discussions on multicultural Australia tend to ignore the initial immigration of European settlers and instead focus on the modern day influx of Asians. Thus, if difference and identities can change, the complexion of today's difference in a society need not be reflected in tomorrow's discussion. Subsequently, to have long-term success, any approach to the management of difference would have to have to be built on an understanding of the variable nature of identity.

However, through a discussion on the essentialist and non-essentialist conceptions of identity in Section 2.2.1 in Chapter Two, it was argued in Section 2.2.2 of the same chapter that multiculturalism as conceived by both Liberalism 1 and 2 are based on a problematic static notion of identity. It is this static notion of identity that precludes both approaches from achieving long-term success. For both theories, difference just 'is' without providing an explicit explanation of why differences exist, an appreciation for their varying degrees of expression, or an appreciation of how they are able to shift over time. For example, to manage the presence of a Chinese community in a multicultural polity, both Liberalism 1 and 2 have the same static understanding of identity where the Chinese are seen to possess no internal differences and their ability to revise their Chinese-ness is not considered. From this understanding of Chinese-ness, Liberalism 1 and 2 part ways in their approach to managing Chinese difference. For Liberalism 1, this 'special' Chinese culture should be ignored by the difference-blind state which instead should protect every member of the polity as equal individuals. According to Liberalism 2, the Chinese should be identified as a distinct collective and the 'special' Chinese qualities possessed by all Chinese should be protected. This static conception found in Liberalism 1 and 2 is not restricted to theoretical discussions. Examination of the

static essentialist notion of identity in multicultural policies has been made in countries such as Canada (Kobayashi, 1993), Australia (Castles *et al.* 1988), Mauritius (Eriksen, 1997), the United States (Turner, 1993), Germany (Radtke, 1994), Sweden (Ålund and Schierup, 1991) and Britain (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1993).

The problems for the attainment of long-term multicultural harmony within a polity owing to Liberalism 1 and 2's static notion of identity are three-fold. (1) Both positions foreclose the possibility for long-term harmony in a multicultural polity due to an overly pessimistic approach to the management of difference. (2) Liberalism 1 with its difference-blind approach to the management of difference where differences are ignored and every member of a polity is protected under the rule of law is too reliant on the enforcement of civility. (3) The need for Liberalism 2 to compartmentalise individuals into distinct groups leads to the perpetuation of stereotypes while also denying individuals the opportunity to redefine themselves.

In order to illustrate these three failings, the diasporic experience of the Chinese, Africans and Jews has been discussed. Following from the understanding of identity as variation, Chapter Three has characterised diasporas as a creation of the widespread dispersal of a community from a point of origin they believe they have in common. Demonstrated through the diasporic experience of the Chinese, Africans and Jews in Chapters Four, Five and Six respectively, the constituents of a diaspora in their far-flung places interact with each other in global diasporic networks to create a uniquely diasporic identity that is developed from a balance between where they are from and where they are at present. Membership to this community is fluid and this membership can only be created through participation. Therefore, being part of a diaspora, like other social collectives, requires effort on

the part of its members. I will now turn to each of the three failings of Liberalism 1 and 2 to review the way the three episodes discussed have highlighted how both approaches to the management of difference are unable to secure long-term harmony.

(1) The Pessimism of Liberalism 1 and 2: One of the major failings of both Liberalism 1 and 2 is that their static conception of identity clouds their assessment of the possibility for inter-group accord. Both theories begin their approach to the management of difference in the belief that difference inevitably leads to conflict as difference and identity are assumed to be unchanging and as this inter-group difference has on occasion led to conflict. Admittedly, as the three episodes have shown, inter-group difference has sometimes led to tension, hostility and conflict. For example, as the murder of Chinese Indonesians in 1998 in Indonesia, the Brixton riots in Britain and the murder of Jews in Spain during the fourteenth century have shown, inter-group relations can result in conflict. However, conflict is just one of the many possible forms of inter-group relations. As the examples have illustrated, individuals such as Mei Quong Tart in Australia and Olaudah Equiano in Britain as well as the diasporic Jews under Ottoman and Christian rule during periods of tolerance, amity is not only also possible but, more often than not, the norm.

Besides the static conception of identity and the moments when there has been inter-group conflict, both Liberalism 1 and 2 may have adopted this pessimistic view on inter-group relationships due to the corresponding conception of home that has accompanied the articulation of particular diasporic identities. Members of diasporas have, from time to time, articulated an uncompromising identity together with a desire to return to where they consider home. Examples of this may be seen in

movements such as Garveyism, elements of Rastafarianism and Zionism. These identities when associated with the traditional negative understanding of the diasporic experience may give the impression that members of a diaspora are 'difficult' minorities due to their intrinsic desire to leave. Although this may have occasionally been the case, as the example of the Peranakans in Chapter Four have demonstrated, home is a fluctuating concept dependent upon the identity that is articulated. As it was seen, home for the Peranakans was articulated to be China, Malaysia or Indonesia dependent upon the context. Furthermore, individuals such as the African American Ralph Ellison were adamant that African Americans were at home in the US, not Africa as the Liberian return movement held.

Therefore, it can be seen that Liberalism 1 and 2 are not aided in their attempt to secure long-term harmony by their pessimistic approach to the management of difference. By failing to consider the possibility for inter-group harmony, both positions advance positions on multiculturalism that rule it out from happening and thus, prevent it from happening.

***(2) The over-reliance on enforcement by Liberalism 1*:** From the three episodes of diaspora discussed, it was demonstrated that a significant problem for Liberalism 1 is tied to its over-reliance on enforcement by a neutral state to prevent hostility and to keep harmony intact. Similar to Hobbes' view on rights in the *Leviathan*, Liberalism 1 assumes that rights can be bestowed from above while seeming unaware that the system of rights in place has originated from somewhere. Subsequently, these 'empty' rights need consistent and strong enforcement. However, once the ability to enforce these rights are weakened, exploited or removed, cohesion comes to an end. It must be acknowledged that this problem for

Liberalism 1 is related to its ability to secure long-term accord specifically as Liberalism 1 in the short-term has been adept at attaining inter-group harmony. For example, during the tolerant periods of the Ottoman Empire, Jews and Gentiles lived successfully alongside each other.

All three diasporic episodes have demonstrated that the long-term success of any policy on multiculturalism requires more than a difference-blind approach to the management of difference through the enforcement of equal rights as difference and identity can surface through inter-group conflict. As demonstrated most vividly by the diasporic Jews through their experience under Ottoman and Christian rule during the Middle Ages and also during the period of emancipation, although inter-group harmony can be attained in a polity through such means in the short-term, these rights are open to revision and may consequently be removed leading to periods of intolerance and violence. Moreover, as seen in the Damascus and Dreyfus affairs, even if there is a willingness to enforce these rights, the equality given to the Jews in France during emancipation did not eliminate the practise of anti-Semitism as policing cannot be everywhere all the time and policing has to be done by individuals who understand why they are enforcing these rights. Seen also in the reaction of African Americans in East Harlem during the Italian invasion of Ethiopia, a difference-blind approach where there is little attempt to foster inter-group understanding can often erupt in sudden conflict as laws may simply be a veneer over hatred. Therefore, for a policy of multiculturalism to succeed in the long-term, there ought to be more social glue to hold the social fabric of a polity together other than relying on the mechanic enforcement of the rule of law.

Thus, although Liberalism 1 is often able to attain a harmonious multicultural polity in the short-term, it is unable to maintain this success in the

long-term. For Liberalism 1 to be successful in the long-term, it has to either be maintained by rigorous enforcement or it has to be supplemented by a policy which will allow members of its populace to foster deeper and greater bonds with each other.

(3) ***The reification of difference by Liberalism 2*:** With regard to Liberalism 2, driven by the commendable desire to work out disadvantageous situations and to protect minority difference from majority domination, this theoretical approach unavoidably fixes the identities of those involved due to its need to attain a comprehensive and lasting identification of specific groups in order to secure the subsequent protection of its members. However, as the revealed through the experience of the diasporic Chinese, Africans and Jews, Liberalism 2 is prevented from doing so due the constantly shifting and altering nature of identity. As identity is perpetually in flux and any moment when it is articulated is only a brief pause in an ongoing process, the identification of groups as required by Liberalism 2 is doomed to failure. As demonstrated by the diasporic Chinese characters of the novels in Chapter Four, the different conceptions of Negritude in Chapter Five and the multiple ways in which Jewish-ness can be understood as seen in Chapter Six, it is very difficult to clearly identify a single or set of core qualities of a particular group in order to classify its members. The diasporic identities of all three groups are continually shifting, making this variable identity difficult to tie down.

Moreover, any attempt to identify specific groups inevitably reifies existing differences and subsequently prevents individuals from redefining their own identity. For example, in attempting to solve the 'Jewish question', Liberalism 2 unconsciously ties Jewish-ness and the relationship Jewish-ness has with non-Jews

to a way of life and mode of living that is more often than not negative. Thus, despite being emancipated in many Western European states, Jews still struggled long and hard in order to be treated as equals within their state as the question surrounding their loyalty loomed large over their heads.

With reference to the prevention of individuals from redefining their own identity, examples of this can be found in the Christian lands of the Middle Ages, where individuals were identified and classified as Jewish and this classification prevented them from redefining themselves and, as such, stopped them from being accepted fully. This restriction placed on the possibility for redefinition is also illustrated by the Peranakans of Malaysia. Owing to the refusal of the Malaysian government in their form of Liberalism 2 to recognise them as native Malays despite their absorption of Malay customs and their long history of settlement in the country, the Peranakans have had one avenue of identity taken away.

7.2 The Wider Implications of the Thesis: The Future of Multiculturalism

Following from the conclusions of this thesis, if both Liberalism 1 and 2 are unable to attain long-term inter-group harmony within a polity, the question remains whether the project of multiculturalism with its desire to see a world living up to the ideal of harmonious multicultural communities is achievable. In this section, I argue that the project of multiculturalism has not been scuttled despite the failings of Liberalism 1 and 2. Instead, based on the experience of diasporas, I argue that multiculturalism's future may lie in a policy of multiculturalism that publicly emphasises non-essentialised understandings of cultures and communities. An example of such an approach can be found in the Parekh Report.

Established by the Runnymede Trust in January 1998 and taking over three years of consultations with academics, civil servants, government departments, non-governmental organisations, community groups and members of the general public, the Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain produced a new approach to the contemporary approaches to multiculturalism (CFMEB, 2000). The report offers both a comprehensive overview of race and ethnic relations in Britain and a significant number of policy recommendations across diverse fields such as employment, education, criminal justice, and sport.

In accord with the argument that identity is best understood as variation as illustrated by the diasporic experience discussed, the report distanced itself from the static and essentialised notions of community found in approaches to multiculturalism such as Liberalism 1 and 2. Thus, two of the key goals of the report were to bring about both a new national narrative and a set of policies conveying an understanding that Britain as a 'community of citizens' and a 'community of communities.' This new understanding of community and cultural belonging put forward in the report is a distinct move away from the static notions of identity found in Liberalism 1 and 2. Its conception of the new multiculturalism of Britain may be described as follows. Britain is a country composed of many different groups, interests and identities. These different groups range from, for example, Home Counties English, Jews, Geordies, Welsh, Liverpudlians, Irish, Bangladeshis, Chinese, African-Caribbeans and Indians. These groups differ from each other as some are large, powerful and long-settled whilst others are smaller, comparatively powerless and newer. In addition, the groups vary in the amount of international links that they have and some groups also have group boundaries that are clearer than others.

It is noteworthy that within the report the view is expressed that these identities do not possess unchanging core qualities. Instead, the report proposes an idea of identity that corresponds with the constantly shifting diasporic identities created in diasporic networks demonstrated by the three episodes with frequent references made to 'interacting and overlapping communities' and the ability of individual's to possess multiple identities (CFMEB, 2000: 3). Due to the length of the report, it is difficult to do justice to every nuance within it. Instead, the three quotes below are sufficiently lucid to fairly convey the emphasis placed on a new understanding of community, belonging and identity. As observed by the report,

> [m]any communities overlap; all affect and are affected by others. More and more people have multiple identities – they are Welsh Europeans, Pakistani Yorkshirewomen, Glaswegian Muslims, English Jews and black British. Most enjoy this complexity but also experience conflicting loyalties. The term 'communities' can give the impression of stable, coherent, historic groups with tidy boundaries. But situations and relationships are changing. It is simply wrong to think that there are easily measured groups of people – working class Scots, black Londoners, Jews, Irish, 'middle' England – who all think alike and are not changed by those around them. For everyone life is more interesting than that. (CFMEB, 2000: 10).

> People have competing attachments to nation, group, subculture, region, city, town, neighbourhood and the wider world. They belong to a range of different but overlapping communities, real and symbolic, divided on cultural issues of the day.... Identities, in consequence, are more situational. This makes Britain, contrary to stereotype, more open. (CFMEB, 2000: 25).

> The boundaries round a community can be quite hard and fast, making it difficult to join or leave voluntarily. But often they're fluid, unfixed. It is in any case entirely possible for someone to be a member – a significant

> member – of several different communities at the same time; indeed, this is usual (CFMEB, 2000: 51) Further, a considerable section show ways in which specific communities – African-Caribbean, Pakistani, Irish, Gypsy, etc. – are multiple in their makeup (CFMEB, 2000: 29-36).

As captured by the three quotes, the conception of identity found in the report is very much in line with the arguments of the thesis and the experience of the three diasporas. Like the characterisation of diaspora forwarded in this thesis, communities in the report are seen to have fuzzy boundaries and the identity of these communities overlap each other (Quote One). Moreover, similar to the way in which diasporic identities are contextual in the sense that they are able to alter according to context, the report holds that multiple identities possessed by individuals and groups in Britain permit different identities to be articulated at different times – that is, identities are situational (Quote Two). On occasion, as demonstrated by diasporic individuals such as Garvey and Herzl, these identities when articulated may seem to hold that group identities are static. However, in accord with transitory nature of diasporic identity where moments of its articulation are attempts to enforce clear boundaries on a shifting concept, the report holds that though boundaries may sometimes seem 'hard', they are in fact fluid and unfixed (Quote Three).

With this conception of identity that is in agreement with 'identity as variation' as argued in this thesis, the Parekh Report recommends a form of multiculturalism that may be described as a combination of Liberalism 1 with Liberalism 2 with the added measure of fostering an 'identity as citizen'. Thus, following Liberalism 1, the report proposes a set of general principles for the equal treatment of all individuals within Britain, that is, a neutral state enforcing equality. However, following Liberalism 2's demand that groups require protection from

majority domination, the report recommends that the concept of equality to be applied to all levels of government has to be sensitive to the 'real differences of experience, background and perception' (CFMEB, 2000: 296). Thus, the attempt here is to straddle Liberalism 1's neutral state approach to difference while being sensitive, like Liberalism 2, to the 'lived difference' between groups. In reference to these two measures, the report proposes 140 recommendations pertaining to areas of public policy that contain the following: ethnic communities must be represented of ethnic communities on public bodies; the media, criminal justice, health and education systems should be subject to ethnic monitoring; issues of race and diversity should be a feature in the training of police, probation and prison officers; school inspection reports should include a section on race equality and cultural diversity; at least one-sixth of the members of the House of Lords should be from Asian and Black community backgrounds; and, the government should formally declare that the United Kingdom is a multicultural society and should issue a draft declaration for consultation.

Besides this focus on a systematic effort to monitor all of society's public institutions and the corresponding drive to inculcate an appreciation of cultural diversity within these public institutions, the report has one further recommendation in order to achieve multicultural harmony that goes beyond Liberalism 1 and 2. Reflecting the argument in this thesis that Liberalism 1 though able to secure short-term harmony but is unable to do so in the long-term, the report stresses the need for core values and common belonging to unifying citizens and communities. Thus, the report holds that 'shared cultural meanings' along with a 'the common national story' is a necessary further step to bond a nation of individuals into a multicultural social unit (CFMEB, 2000: 16). Consequently, with these shared bonds, members of

a polity feel a sense of membership, solidarity and empathy for fellow citizens whom they may never personally know. The Commission seeks such an emphasis on social cohesion in one nation while avoiding 'oppressive uniformity based on a single substantive culture' (CFMEB, 2000: 56). The crucial mechanism for accomplishing this is citizenship (including the already implemented measure of a British citizenship ceremony) where an 'identity as citizen' is created to ensure that 'diversity need not be divisive' (Delanty, 2003).

Overall, by acknowledging the diversity within multicultural Britain while also accepting that these different identities are fluid, the report is a commendable approach to multiculturalism as it accepts internal diversity (both within and between groups), strategic identity and the possibility of change. Two difficulties within the report though highlight how difficult it is to shift away from non-essentialised understanding of identity when managing difference: (1) Firstly, it is difficult to imagine how a more open view towards multiple and overlapping communities and identities can be reconciled with the policy recommendations of the report. (2) The report is overly focussed on ensuring the loyalty of individuals to just one state.

With regards to the difficulty of reconciling a fluid understanding of identity and the report's policy recommendations, it may be argued that with its recommendation that all policy changes should be sensitive to the 'real differences of experience, background and perception', the report comes back full circle to the problems Liberalism 2 faces when identifying groups. In order to be sensitive to 'real differences', there is the corresponding need to identify how groups are different and, as such, the twin problems of identifying different groups and compartmentalising individuals into distinct groups arise. In reference to the second

difficulty of the report, its focus on establishing a united multicultural Britain is challenged by the experience of diasporas where its members have had moments of dual-loyalties to two different states. In a passage of the report summarising belonging, the Parekh Report seems aware that it is not unusual, particularly in the modern world, for loyalties to be transnational where feelings of kinship and shared interests for people are in at least two different countries (CFMEB, 2000: 51). The report does not probe the implications of this statement for multiculturalism but as the experience of diaspora have shown, such dual sense of belonging has been a persistent challenge.

Despite the two criticisms raised here, the attempt by the report at publicly emphasising an understanding of 'identity as variation' and its desire to bridge these shifting differences through the creation of a unifying identity as citizen has moved the project of multiculturalism forward from the conventional forms of Liberalism 1 and 2.

7.3 Final remarks:

Through the diasporic experience of the Chinese, Africans and the Jews, it has been established that both Liberalism 1 and 2 are unable to secure long-term inter-group harmony within a polity owing to the static notion of identity that underpins both of them. This thesis gives credibility to the argument that a successful policy of multiculturalism will have to approach the management of difference with an understanding that identities can vary over time and at different places. However, as demonstrated by the Parekh Report, such a starting point has its own difficulties. These difficulties highlight a number of questions that have to be addressed in

further research. First of all, there is a need to explore the possibilities for the establishment of a set of policy recommendations for the management of difference that is as fluid as the identities it seeks to manage. Secondly, although the creation of an 'identity as citizen' as recommended in the Parekh Report is a step towards unifying citizens of a multicultural polity, multicultural discourse needs to extend beyond individuals and groups recognised to be members of a state to those that are within it but not seen to be part of it. If multiculturalism wants to secure long-term harmony within a polity, the focus has to be widened from the citizens of a polity to the treatment of non-citizens within its borders. Thirdly, as illustrated by the experience of the three diasporas, it is very likely that many in modern society may have loyalties that are unconfined to the state of which they are members. Thus, future research needs to move the debate on multiculturalism out of the confines of the state and into the international realm.

With human movement and the accompanying experience of lived difference set to be a ubiquitous feature of contemporary life, the project of multiculturalism cannot be ignored. Despite the difficulties within multiculturalism, the ability of diasporas to live harmoniously alongside more settled communities as demonstrated by this thesis offers positive proof that 'we all can get along' despite our (variable) differences.

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